

SLOVAKIA

VOL. VIII

DECEMBER, 1958

NO. 3 (28)



IN THIS ISSUE:

WHY THE CZECHS DID NOT FIGHT

HON. B. CARROLL REESE: THE SUDETEN GERMANS

SLOVAK NATIONALISM:

FEDERATIVE TENDENCIES OF SLOVAK NATIONALISM

THE SLOVAKS AND THEIR NEIGHBORS

CASTLES OF SLOVAKIA: KRÁSNA HÔRKA

SLOVAKIA'S LIFELINE WITH THE WEST

RICHARD WEISHAR:

THE ROOTS OF COMMUNISM IN THE ČSR.

ANDREW HLINKA AND PRAGUE

THE HISTORY OF SLOVAKIA (Continued)

WHO SAID IT: P. 46, 51, 68, 80

• • •

Edited and compiled by
PHILIP A. HROBAK

S L O V A K I A

Box 150

Middletown, Pa.

• • •

Published by
THE SLOVAK LEAGUE OF AMERICA

GANSER LIBRARY
MILLERSVILLE STATE COLLEGE
MILLERSVILLE, PA. 17551

RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

THIS IS SLOVAKIA, Hrušovský; \$1.00.

THE SLOVAKS, Yurchak; paper cover \$2.00; cloth \$3.00.

SKETCHES FROM SLOVAK HISTORY, Škultéty; \$1.00 (paper);
\$2.00 (cloth cover).

THE DELIVERANCE OF SISTER CECILIA, \$3.75.

THE CHURCH OF SILENCE IN SLOVAKIA, Zúbek; \$3.50.

FALSE FREEDOM, Delaney; \$2.00.

SLOVAKIA'S ROAD TO STATEHOOD, Woytko; \$1.50.

"CZECHOSLOVAKIA" — History Made to Order, Hrobák; 50c.

UNCONQUERABLES, Paučo; \$3.50

ANTHOLOGY OF SLOVAK POETRY, Kramoriš; \$2.00.



SLOVAKIA is published periodically by the Slovak League of America, a cultural and civic federation of Americans of Slovak descent.

The main purpose of SLOVAKIA is to promote a better understanding and appreciation of the Slovak nation and its long, hard struggle for freedom and independence.

\$1.00 per annum in the U. S. A. — \$2.00 elsewhere.

SLOVAKIA

P. O. Box 150

Middletown, Pa.

Printed in the U. S. A.

JEDNOTA PRESS

Middletown, Pa.

SLOVAKIA

Published by the Slovak League of America

VOL. VIII

DECEMBER, 1958

NO. 3 (28)

WHY THE CZECHS DID NOT FIGHT

Dr. John A. Bata

Whatever has been written about this subject has practically always been flavored, distorted with excuses, malevolence, derision, anger, shame, embitterment, and appeasement, according to political interest and viewpoint and attempts to cover up. Most of the time this smelled of wrong doing, misfortune, a new White Mountain. Never, however, was there any trace of acknowledging how and why something happened and who was to blame for its happening.

Dr. John A. Bata is a member of the famous Czech shoemakers, who, like so many others who had dared to criticize the ruinous policy of Dr. Edward Beneš, even though belatedly, were persecuted by Beneš and his followers even in exile. This is a translation of the original Czech article "Proč jsme nebojovali" that was published in "BOHEMIA" — the journal of Czech Democratic Federalists — Oct. 30, 1957.

That was a terrible, historical defeat of our statehood without a fight and the world thinks that we fled from the battle. What has been written up to this time by the Czecho-Slovaks about this has only attempted to excuse or apologize for the ultimatum of the Western Powers at Munich in 1938: the Western Powers were guilty; the Russians were guilty for not coming to help us; Hitler was guilty; etc .

And the world keeps on chuckling at our naiveté.

Humanly this is natural. Everyone would rather pay himself indulgently even when he is not altogether certain that he deserves a boot. We have been extremely well-trained to cry about and bewail White Mountain; we can

make a goat bleat about it. But this bleating cannot silence our conscience, gnawing at our mind, which asks quietly: "Whom do you want to fool, chuckle-head?"

King Midas was an example of a man who was afraid to look truth in the face. He had donkey ears and an astronomically high hat to cover them. When he gathered enough strength to look at his ears, they disappeared. He was a whole man.

Now, if we had the courage of Midas to look upon realities under the bark of truth and related events to other examples in the world, perhaps it would dawn upon us why we did not fight in 1938. It would become apparent that we ourselves were at fault, we the citizens of that lost State, which was the Czecho-Slovak Republic and which we allowed to collapse. We did not lose the State in October, 1938; we lost it before that time. October, 1938, was only the date of the thrashing we deserved, as was perhaps also all that followed it.

We did not have an adequate conception regarding nation and state. Somehow we had an idea that the series of political fetishes and partisan lables, according to which we ran — and still run — here and there, made a nation of us. We seemed to think — and still think — that an equal and secret right of ballot and democracy, which we saw someplace, but did not understand properly and with it elected irresponsibly an irresponsible leader, that this, too, made us a nation. And that our elected leaders would at once become statesmen and men because they wore striped pants and acquired a few titles. Because we, the citizens and voters, did not think, catastrophe overtook us. We had an idea, but not the knowledge or conviction of what was needed to make a nation of us and a solid, organic unit of our state. In the meantime, however, our politicians, diplomats, and statesmen did what they pleased, and particularly did they run away from responsibilities into demogogy, lying, and false promises; the interests of the Republic and nation were bartered away; obligations and oaths were forgotten, and the Constitution was spat upon; they used their positions to serve their own personal

interests and whims and used the nation and state like rags.

In twenty-five years, the Republic was bartered away twice by these politicians-statesmen with titles and striped pants. First to the Nazis, then to the Communists. In both cases this happened against our will. The cause of this is the same as that for our not fighting in 1938: in responsible positions we did have persons of the male sex, but not men. None of us can justify for ourselves or before any judicious person the fact that we did not fight. The nation was armed to the teeth; it had an army of a million men, excellently trained and for decades inculcated with love for its nation and filled with a will to fight and a willingness to sacrifice. And yet, the nation did not fight as it wanted to and knew it had to so that it could preserve its freedom and independence which it had eked out after 300 years of dependence and bondage under which it almost perished.

Some of our people get angry when they read or hear the expression "our nation capitulated." They come back with the retort that not the nation, but the leaders capitulated. I do not agree. There was only one leader: the president, the supreme commander of an army of a million men, an army splendidly equipped, trained, and ready for war. We elected him directly or indirectly to leadership. We are, therefore, also responsible for him. To turn away from this responsibility is senseless or cowardly.

John Masaryk told me in the spring of 1940 that the ambassadors of France and Britian literally dragged Dr. Beneš from bed at three o'clock in the morning and forced him to sign the capitulation by an ultimatum. That started an argument. I could not understand how a commander of an army of million men could be forced to capitulation by some two frocked uncles and thereby surrender the army, equipment, and state to enemies and the nation to slavery.

John Masaryk retorted that the question did not concern shoes with which I was familiar. I still contended that a statesman could not be forced to do anything. He could be killed, overthrown by a revolution, deposed, kidnapped,

tortured, that he could commit suicide, but that he could not be forced. We have an example, I added: Master John Hus.

John Masaryk snapped back that what I was saying smacked of Fascism, that only that 'grázl Mussolini' said that a nation that does not suffer to sacrifice for the independence and freedom of its country is not worthy of it.

I told him that was the way I saw it and that I was convinced that even his father, TGM, would sooner agree in this matter with Mussolini than with him and Beneš. From that time on I did not get along with John Masaryk and was blackballed by Beneš and his government in London. During the war we wrote each other several times, but, knowing Beneš, I knew that he was planning revenge.

On June 6, 1940, I was placed on the English "Blacklist" — to this day I do not know why — with indications that Beneš's London "government" had its hands in the matter. And after Dr. Beneš's visit to the White House, I was also placed on the American "Blacklist" without any investigation. To people in his circle Dr. Beneš remarked that I had spoken improperly with him in 1938. I spoke with him as man to man. Perhaps the fact that I told him that he ought to behave more like a man was regarded an impropriety.

As in 1938, so I also contend today that we had no right to avoid war when the defense of our independence was concerned — like TGM and Mussolini did, if you want to put it that way. Up to this time, however, there was always something indistinct that prevented me from writing my view publicly, the view that turned John Masaryk against me. But that indistinctness has now disappeared due to a strangely simple cause: in August, 1957, an Argentine steamer went down in La Plata and eighty travelers drowned. It sank — and then it dawned on me. Leaders, captains among people, have their honor which they treasure more than life itself. The captain goes down with his sinking ship. It is the morale of men who understand responsibility with fatal seriousness and courage.

In our nation we had no ship captains so that we

might compare their behavior when disaster strikes the ship they are in charge of. But we did have in our history a series of captains of the ship of state. And behold, our state captains comprehended the responsibilities and manliness of leadership just as honestly as those ship captains. The famous "Iron and Gold King," the Czech Přemysl Otakar II, offered his life on the eve of the battle on Moravské Pole to save the honor of the nation and the army. At that sad time his life was indispensable to the life of the nation, but he died in battle. He was betrayed by Milota of Dedic, a member of the Benešov clan. The victor Rudolph Habsburg had his courageous rival burned with honors and scornfully exiled the traitor who had come to pay him homage. And he did not shatter the Czech empire as he had threatened.

Famous blind King John did not run from battle when the French, who had called on him for help, fled from the battlefield. He gave the Czechs an example of courage and defiance of death in battle with his memorable utterance: "Let us hope that it will never happen that a Czech king shall flee from battle!" By his fortitude he prepared the way to the emperor's crown for his son Charles IV. The English crown prince honored him for his bravery and to this very day bears on his coat of arms the three famous feathers of the brave Czech King John.

In 1938, from contacts with our generals, I was convinced that our army was better equipped and trained and possessed a better fighting spirit than Hitler's army. This fact was confirmed in Nuremberg before the International Court even by Hitler's Chief of Staff, General Halder. He said that his predecessor, General Beck, resigned his position in July, 1938, in protest against war with Czecho-Slovakia which Hitler had planned. General Halder had said that he, like the majority of German commanders, was against war even if it was only with independent Czecho-Slovakia. General Beck proclaimed that even such a war would have been fatal for Germany. Halder added that, when Beck's resignation did not have any effect on Hitler, the German generals planned to overthrow Hitler

on the eve of the war. But the putsch had to be speedily called off when Dr. Edward Beneš capitulated for Czecho-Slovakia.

Today when all of this is known, some people will want to reproach and malign me for the indecency of attacking a dead man. But I do not want to be a wise thinker after the cure. We must remember, however, that all we, the people of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, learned only now, all this was known accurately and in detail by our Supreme Commander and President, Dr. Edward Beneš, already in July, August, and September, 1938, and also by the line of generals, politicians, diplomats, and high state officials. In his position Beneš was bound to know this; he had at his disposal gigantic, highly effective, and costly means to know about it.

In Paris, in 1939, an officer of the "Deuxième Bureau" visited me and expressed his amazement over the accuracy of reports of the Czecho-Slovak Intelligence Service. So, Dr. Edward Beneš knew that the German generals looked upon war with Czecho-Slovakia as a step that would be fatal to Germany. If, therefore, despite this knowledge Dr. Beneš let himself "be forced" to capitulation, he committed treason. In the solemn oath taken when he assumed the duties of president, the President and Supreme Commander promised solemnly before the nation and Almighty God that he shall serve only and exclusively the state and the entire nation. He promised to sacrifice his life, if necessary, and without hesitation even the life of half the nation in defense of the state and freedom.

When Beneš was sworn in as President, there were present several hundred leading politicians, soldiers, officials, diplomats, ministers. Where were all these people when Dr. Beneš signed the capitulation and thus committed perjury and high treason? There can be no doubt that they had the duty to prevent such a capitulation and, if necessary, even to kill or overthrow the man guilty of high treason. But what did the people around him do? Nothing!

And worse. Many of them even escorted him into exile. They bowed profoundly before the man guilty of high

treason, adhered to him, supported and helped him to install himself as exile-president and to return to our home as president again of the State he had betrayed to the Communists and "liberated" into Communism.

We see that up to the present time traitor Beneš is still honored, glorified, and praised by the very same gentlemen as a national hero and martyr. Let us look at these events with the eyes of normal people in the world, whether they be westerns or easterners. Even if they not provoke us from our lethargy out of regard for us, they nevertheless think terrible things about us.

Let us take any other country, for example, little Finland cramped somewhere in the north and directly under the heel of the most brutal power. Can you imagine a Finn singing such a capitulation and not being cut down the moment he did it?

Do not ask who was supposed to kill him. There were hundreds of people who had the manly duty to kill the scoundrel and traitor, since for decades they were in a position that charged them to do so, even if their manly honor did not.

In heaven's name, will those forces never be awakened that would want to see the entire extent of the deceitful game of the knave and coward, whom the nation that was drunk and lulled to sleep with socialism placed on the throne of Czech kings so that it might be betrayed by him?

Why does not our exile, as well as our nation at home, wake up and use the broom of shame on that band of traitors who must have known and still know everything that I write about and yet brazenly sing a song of cowardice and treason as if it were our sacred national anthem?

Let us imagine how different it could have been if the nation would have — as it should have — rid itself of Beneš's command in time and demonstrated to the world how the descendants of the divine warriors know how to fight for their country. It is possible that in the end our army would have been beaten, but not before months of terrible fighting. And who can say how many other coun-

tries would have thrust themselves upon Hitler's army to finish it already in 1939-1940 and not in 1945?

The German commanders should have overthrown Hitler without Beneš's capitulation; then World War would not have happened at all. And the Germans without Hitler would have been — as they are today — all of them, not divided, in the western camp.

In a fight for its independence, Czecho-Slovakia would have gained a blessing, a baptism by fire, and would have taken its place among the first states of Europe. It would have finished its first test of statehood with complete success, a test which now still awaits us.

As it is, instead of being in the forefront as a free nation among the free, our state is an unwilling scamp or against the West and our nation an unwilling scamp or dog's head of communist imperialism. Well, we know that role the "Psohlavic" (dog's heads) played, and the fate that awaits them from the Lamingers.

We must make up our minds as to what we really want. Do we want political parties, a party, or State? Do we want a party to whom the State and nation would be a rag, as it is today of the Communist Party? We know that a certain grouping of parties led the State and nation into the thralldom of a Nazi protectorate. A grouping of parties, all promoting socialism, led it into the slavery of a Communist protectorate. If it is not clear to us that the State is above party and that loyalty to a State stands high above loyalty to any party, then there is no sense in thinking and dreaming about any kind of liberation, because in such a case we cannot attain it. That would be a Sisyphean effort, which has already twice disappointed us.

As long as we shall elect a leader, we must hold a stricter relation to him than to anyone else. We must afford him the possibility to lead and to show himself a man and we must see to it that he also fulfills his responsibility. If not, we must overthrow or even kill him! After all, are we or are we not the descendants of the glorious warriors of God, the sons and brothers of the famous Czecho-Slovak legionnaires? Let us forget political partisanship. The nation and the State are above any and all parties!

HON. B. CARROLL REECE

THE SUDETEN GERMANS

Restoration of International Morality

Perhaps few people in the world today are more firmly united in opposing Communism than are the 16 million Germans expelled from the German provinces east of the Odes-Neise line, the Sudetenland, and other parts of Europe. These sturdy people, outnumbering the total population of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark combined, experienced in 1945 the full impact of the Red invasion of their ancient homelands. Their expulsion to Western Germany resulted in the tragic death of more than 3 million of their number.

Among these 16 million German expellees were 3.3 million Sudeten Germans, the latter group equal in size to the total population of either Eire or Norway. They were expelled in 1945 and 1946 from their ancient homeland by the Communist-led Czecho-Slovak Government of the so-called National Front. About 300,000 of them died during the process of expulsion.

When speaking of the Sudetenland, I refer to the territory comprising the border regions of Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia, that is, the border regions of the western part of present-day Czecho-Slovakia. In 1921, 3.2 million Sudeten Germans and 6.8 million Czechs were living in Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia while, in 1935, the figures showed 3.3 million Sudeten Germans and 7.4 million Czechs.

As a political entity, a state, Czecho-Slovakia does not antedate the year of 1918 when Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia, with its Czechs and German population, were combined with Slovakia, the latter comprising 2.3 million Slovaks and 692,000 Magyars, and with Carpathian Ruthenia inhabited by 549,000 Ruthenians. Nevertheless, Czechs and Germans have been living side by side in those first-named regions for nearly a thousand years.

The Foundation of Czecho-Slovakia

Led by T. G. Masaryk and Edvard Beneš, Czech politicians saw in World War I the opportunity for their people to

secede from the Hapsburg empire and set up an independent republic. **Promising the Slovaks full autonomy, Masaryk persuaded them to join the Czechs in forming one state when he concluded with the Slovak League of America the Pittsburgh Agreement of May 30, 1918.** The new Czecho-Slovak Republic then came into being on October 28, 1918.

At that hour the Sudeten Cermans, on their part, decided to establish the provinces of German-Bohemia and Sudetenland, and to associate these with the new Republic of Austria. Head of the provincial government at Prague was at the time Dr. Rudolf Lodgman von Auen. He is today the president of the National Union of Sudeten German Expellees.

Dr. von Lodgman had long urged a solution of the problem of Austria-Hungary on lines of federalism. He advocated freedom — his ancestors had fled England at the time of Elizabeth I in search of freedom — and he stood for the right to self-determination. But in spite of the fact that Austria-Hungary was ostensibly dismembered so as to realize that right, firmly proclaimed by our President Woodrow Wilson, it was squarely refused to the 3.2 million Sudeten Germans who were forced against their will to be part of the new Czecho-Slovak Republic.

To subdue the demands of the people, the Czechs even dispatched troops to the Sudetenland and when, in March 1919, there were public demonstrations, the Czech military fired into the crowds causing many casualties. Leading the resistance movement in those days was Josef Seliger, chairman of the Sudeten German Social Democratic Party.

Headed by Dr. Beneš, the Czech delegation to the Paris Peace Conference did not shrink away from using such tricks as presenting maps showing a Sudeten German area falsely reduced. The deceit was later contradicted even by the official Czecho-Slovak census figure. In an oral statement to the Big Four, Beneš admitted that the Sudeten Germans, if given a free choice, would probably secede from the new republic. To compensate for denying them the right to self-determination Beneš, in a written memorandum to the peace conference, went on record in favor of a Swiss type of constitution for Czecho-Slovakia. It remained an empty promise.

Dr. von Lodgman and the Slovak spokesman, Msgr. Andrew Hlinka, as well as leaders of the Magyars in Czecho-Slovakia also managed to go to Paris to attend the peace conference. But they were kept in their hotels behind barbed wire and were not given a hearing.

Prophetic Warning of a True American

It was a man representing the United States who objected to the flagrant violation of the right to self-determination in the specific instance of the Sudeten Germans: Prof. Archibald Cary Coolidge, the well-known Harvard historian. In December 1918, he was appointed by the Secretary of State to be political observer in Austria-Hungary, assigned to the American Commission to Negotiate Peace and instructed to head a field mission to the former dual monarchy. (Professor Coolidge incidentally is a founder member of the New York Council in Foreign Relations and served as first editor of its quarterly, *Foreign Affairs*.)

Dr. A. C. Coolidge summed up his observations in a detailed memorandum of March 10, 1919, which he submitted to the Peace Commission. He dealt with the problem of nationalities and new boundaries in all parts of the former Hapsburg monarchy and set out stating:

"To grant to the Czecho-Slovaks all the territory they demand would be not only an injustice to millions of people unwilling to come under Czech rule, but it would also be dangerous and perhaps fatal to the future of the new state . . . The Bloodshed on March 3 when Czech soldiers in several towns fired on Germans crowds . . . was shed in a manner that is not easily forgiven . . . For the Bohemia of the future to contain within its limits great numbers of deeply discontented inhabitants . . . will be a perilous experiment and one which can hardly promise success in the long run."

Three weeks later, on April 1, 1919, the Sudeten German question was taken up at the Peace Conference meeting discussing the report of the Czecho-Slovak Commission on the frontiers between Czecho-Slovakia and Germany. It was at this meeting when our Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, objected to including into the Czecho-Slovak State large Sudeten Germans areas and declared that —

The American delegates objected to the whole method of drawing frontier lines on strategic principles.

And that —

The fixing of frontier lines with a view to their military strength was directly contrary to the whole spirit . . . of the policy of the United States as set forth in the declaration of President Wilson.

Prospective Ally of France As Against Germany

M. Laroche of the French delegation, upon being asked at this meeting whether the commission would approve of a plebiscite in the area, replied that a plebiscite could be proposed without extending it to the remainder of the German Bohemians, which would reduce the Czecho-Slovak state to very slender proportions. Mr. Lansing thereupon plainly said that this was not a good reason to justify an injustice. However, the views of the French Foreign Minister prevailed, namely, to strengthen Czecho-Slovakia, which M. Pichon trusted "**would remain an ally of France**" as against Germany.

The United States, however, then began to withdraw from the scene of European political intrigues. **The constitution of the Czecho-Slovak Republic was devised by a mostly Czech commission and not by a duly elected convention.** Czech became the official language. The Sudeten Germans were not given a fair chance to participate. The facts of the undemocratic beginnings of Czecho-Slovakia should not be overlooked.

The Czech land reform law of 1919 allotted 2,025,400 acres of German property in the Sudetenland to proteges of the Czech political parties. Only 7 percent of the land taken from Sudeten German owners was given to Sudeten German farmers, while 93 percent was handed over to new Czech settlers. In addition, land property expropriated in the central parts of Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia, that is, outside of the Sudetenland, amounting to another 3,818,064 acres and owned by Germans, was also handed over to the Czechs. In the Sudetenland proper, 31 percent of the entire land area was confiscated in 1919. The Czech colonists were settled and Czech schools were built with the aim to break up the German language area.

Discrimination Against the Sudeten Germans

Although the Sudeten Germans represented about 30 percent of the total population of Bohemia and Moravia-

Silesia, they made up only 10 percent of the employees of the general civil service, 13.1 percent of the postal service, 12.8 percent of the judicial administration service, 12.4 percent of the railway employees, and only 5.4 percent of the army officer corps. The police force was almost exclusively Czech. Administrative reforms in 1927 must also be regarded as discriminatory, though a smoothly working publicity machine was able to show the outside world the picture of what appeared to be a democracy.

In the 1920 parliamentary elections the Sudeten German Parties won 74 out of the 300 available seats. Some of these parties, the so-called Activists, entered the government coalition and, since 1926, most political parties of the Sudeten Germans participated in the government coalition, thus showing their honest desire to cooperate. But they were unable to gain any ground toward reforms on federative lines. Even a late-in-the-day palliative assurance of more posts to be assigned to Sudeten German civil servants remained an empty promise.

The worldwide economic crisis at the end of the 1920's imposed a heavy burden on the Sudeten Germans. Czech bankers and administrators gave preference to Czech enterprises. Out of 800,000 unemployed 500,000 were Sudeten Germans.

In 1935, the Sudeten German Party, a union of a number of political groups, polled 1,249,530 votes and thus emerged as the largest political party in all of Czecho-Slovakia, but was forced to remain in opposition. Early in 1937, several younger members of those German parties that participated in the government coalition made once more a concerted effort to convince the Czechs of the urgency of thoroughgoing reforms. Hans Schütz, of the Christian Social Party, sternly demanded equal rights, while Wenzel Jaksch, of the Social Democratic Party, bluntly asked whether or not there was still a place in the Czecho-Slovak Republic for genuine Sudeten German partnership. Incidentally, both men are today distinguished members of the German Bundestag.

In the growing crisis of 1938, Lord Runciman was chosen to head a mission of mediation and, after a close study on the ground, he reported:

"It is hard to be ruled by an alien race . . . In the last elections in 1935 the Sudeten German Party polled more votes than any other single party . . . But they can always be outvoted; and consequently some of them feel that constitutional action is useless for them . . . Even as late as the time of my mission, I could find no readiness on the part of the Czecho-Slovak Government to remedy (the complaints) on anything like an adequate scale . . .

Just as it is essential for the international position of Switzerland that her policy should be entirely neutral, so an analogous policy is necessary for Czecho-Slovakia — not only for her own future existence but for the peace of Europe."

However, Czecho-Slovakia refused to admit its multi-national status and did not strive for a position of neutrality. In spite of its vulnerability, because of the large percentage of citizens of non-Czech nationality, it allowed itself to be used as a political pawn, and since the treaty in 1935 with the Soviet Union, increasingly as a pawn in the hands of the Kremlin, thereby causing its own gradual disintegration.

The Prague government treated the Slovaks in much the same way as the Sudeten Germans. About half of Czecho-Slovakia's total population was tired of being bossed by the 7.4 million Czechs. No wonder that the foundation of the republic began to crumble, when the Anglo-French *démarche* of September 21, 1938, demanded the cession to Germany of the Sudeten region. It was soon followed by demands of Poland and Hungary for the cession of areas inhabited by their conationals, 131,000 Poles and 692,000 Magyars, and finally by the declaration of independence of the 3 million Slovaks who sought recognition as a nation.

Sauce of the Goose Not To Be Sauce for the Gander

From the beginning the Czechs had been showing a lack of realism, a lack of willingness to plan, in good time, for constitutional reforms. If in the years after 1918 a wise solution had earnestly been sought, events might well have taken a different course. The word "Munich" has since been linked in our mind with a short-sighted, dangerous policy vis-a-vis an aggressive dictator. Surely the right to self-determination should not be exercised by employing violence which would only bring about new injustice. Nevertheless, the right to self-determination is today recognized as a canon of international law. A brief glance at the map of Asia and

Africa will suffice to convince everybody of its potency and potentiality, of its full meaning in the realities of present-day world affairs.

As to Munich, it should be remembered that neither the Czechs nor the Sudeten Germans were partners to that agreement. It was made by the four European big powers. When Hitler, in 1939, under a flimsy pretext occupied the central area of Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia he openly violated the right to an independent national life of the Czech people just as the Czechs, two decades before, had violated that same right of the Sudeten Germans.

To charge the Sudeten Germans with treason against the Czecho-Slovak Republic is beside the point, when the charge is made by the Czechs who themselves set the example. In opposing Austria-Hungary, Masaryk, Beneš, and their adherents had solicited during World War I the support of foreign governments and had organized thousands of Czech deserters from the Austrian Army to join Czech legions on the side of the Allies. It was hard to make Sudeten Germans later believe that as to their own case "sauce of the goose was not to be sauce for the gander." The expulsion of the Sudeten Germans cannot be based on treason allegedly committed by them against the Czecho-Slovak Republic nor upon the charge of association with Hitler's policy of suppressing the Czechs.

Expulsion of the Sudeten Germans

Dr. Beneš unfortunately seems to have blamed the Sudeten Germans for his own shortcomings and considered them instrumental in his downfall in 1938. His mind was beclouded by Germanophobia. He did not seek a just and fair solution in his dealings with those Sudeten Germans politicians who were, like he himself, exiled by the Nazi regime and living in London during World War II: I refer to Wenzel Jaksch and Richard Reitzner, both of whom now are members of the German Bundestag.

According to his memoirs — *Paměti* — published in Prague in 1947, this is what Beneš at a reception in London on January 7, 1942, told Wenzel Jaksch in an effort to have

him agree to deportation from Czecho-Slovakia of all Sudeten Germans, excepting a limited number of anti-Fascists:

During the social revolution which will certainly occur we shall have to rid our country of all the German bourgeoisie, the pan-German intelligentsia and those workers whom hate turned Fascist. This would be the final solution and, so far as we are concerned, the only possible solution which we would be able to implement, namely combining our social revolution with the national revolution.

I added to Jaksch and his friends: We must have the courage to speak about this openly; and especially you Social Democrats should have the courage to do so. This plan even contains an element of Marxism and Marxist dialectics in the revolutionary process which must inevitably accompany the changes in the social structure of the nation as an outcome of this great and worldwide catastrophe. After the first world war . . . I foretold that the German nationalist bourgeoisie in our country would some time in the future attempt a counter-revolution and that there would be no peace between us until this bourgeoisie was subjected to a similar revolution to that which the Czechs had gone through in past centuries. Now, after the second world war, this revolution is inevitable; and the entire nationalities problem in our country will be radically solved at the same time.

It is only fair to say that some Czech opposition was voiced against these plans, notably from Army General Lev Prchala.

Beneš' Unscrupulous Play

It is rather unfortunate that Beneš apparently had no scruples as to how he would gain his end. For instance, in a conference on May 12, 1943, with President Roosevelt he asserted that the Russians were willing to agree to the transfer of the Sudeten Germans. Then, 17 days later, on May 29, Dr. Hubert Ripka explained to Mr. Bogomolov, the Soviet ambassador in London, that the Americans had already agreed to the transfer, and that under these circumstances the Czecho-Slovak government in exile expected the Soviets to consent. On June 6, Ripka telephoned Beneš, who was at the time in the United States, that Soviet Russia had just agreed to the transfer — the same agreement which Beneš had used as a lever in his conference with President Roosevelt on May 12, 1943.

The Soviets were the first allies to grant to the Czech government in exile *de jure* recognition. Against the advice of western statesmen Beneš went to Moscow and in 1943 signed a new treaty with the Soviet government. Eager to

show his ability at playing an important role in the arena of world politics he may have thought of himself as a man who would build the great bridge between the West and the East. As seen in retrospect, however, he seems to have been prior to the Teheran Conference more than perhaps any other person active in strengthening Roosevelt's ill-conceived trust in Stalin. In this way, I regret to say, he certainly proved to be a valuable tool of the Kremlin.

Toward the end of World War II, Beneš returned to Prague by way of Moscow, accompanying the Red Army, as it advanced from the east into Czecho-Slovakia, and himself was accompanied by a Czech government group led by a Communist, Zdenek Fierlinger, who is today the president of the Czecho-Slovak parliament.

At Košice, in eastern Slovakia, Beneš and his colleagues proclaimed on April 5, 1945, the so-called Košice program according to which the country for the time being was to be ruled by presidential decrees. The program was signed by: Zdenek Fierlinger, Josef David, Klement Gottwald, Viliam Široký — today the Prime Minister, Dr. Ján Šrámek, Ján Masaryk — son of the first president of Czecho-Slovakia — Ludvik Svoboda, Dr. Hubert Ripka, Václav Nosek, Dr. Vavro Šrobár, Dr. Zdenek Nejedlý, Dr. Jaroslav Stránský, Václav Kopecký, Bohumil Laušman, Julius Duriš, Dr. Ján Pietor, Antonín Hasal, František Hála, Dr. Ján Soltesz, Dr. Adolf Procházka, Václav Majer, Dr. Vladimír Clementis, Dr. Mikuláš Ferjenčík, and Ján Lichner.

Outlawing Political Opponents

Czecho-Slovakia was now restored within the pre-Munich boundaries, except for Carpathian Ruthenia which the Soviets had seized and incorporated into the Soviet Ukraine, and which the new Czecho-Slovak government then ceded to the Soviet Union. **The Slovaks were once more subjected to Czech domination.** The new government announced the formation of a so-called National Front, supposedly a coalition of the Communist Party and three parties willing to collaborate with them, that is, Social Democrats, National Socialists, and People's Party.

All Czech political parties of the center and the right

side were declared illegal, among them the National Democrats, the Artisans, and the Republican Agrarians, the latter being the biggest political party in pre-war Czecho-Slovakia. Their leaders and functionaries were jailed. All Slovak parties were likewise outlawed and, instead, new leftist parties, such as the so-called Slovak Democratic Party and other puppet groups, were artificially created. In this way, political parties were abolished which, before World War II, had long represented the large majority of the non-Communist Czech and Slovak peoples. In addition to these millions of Czechs and Slovaks, all Sudeten Germans and Magyars were disfranchised. Only by applying this method of outlawing political opponents — exactly copying Hitler's procedure in Berlin in 1933 — and of exploiting the prejudice of their willing collaborators, did the Communists succeed in 1946 in showing up as the largest political party.

Now free elections, freedom of speech and press were abolished. Kangaroo courts, called people's courts, were established in order to liquidate the opponents of Communism. So-called National Committees, fashioned after the Russian local "Soviets", were set up to take over the work of administrative offices. The economy was nationalized. While Beneš himself assumed the office of president, Communists were appointed to key positions at all levels and, from the beginning, were in control of police, army, and the state propaganda machine.

The non-Communist ministers collaborated at every turn and supported the Communist line. Since some of these people later escaped to the West it may be of interest to mention, in addition to those who signed the Košice program, some of the prominent politicians of the era of the so-called National Front: **Dr. Peter Zenkl** — Vice Premier; **Dr. Jozef Lettrich** — leader of the Red puppet Slovak Democratic Party who, after the 1946 elections when the Slovaks had failed to vote for the Communists, signed the agreement abolishing Slovakia's autonomy; **Dr. Jan Papánek**, **Dr. Juraj Slavík**, and **František Němec** — who represented as ambassador abroad the Red regime of Prague; **Ferdinand Peroutka** — a Socialist journalist; and **Miloš Vaněk** — one of the original bosses of the Czecho-Slovak Communist Party.

The Reign of Terror — Rule of Decrees

A reign of terror began with the arrival of the Soviet Red Army and the regime which was to become the government of the so-called National Front. One of the first administrative measures provided for the hasty construction of concentration camps into which tens of thousands of Sudeten Germans were driven. The late R. R. Stokes, a former British minister, has given a vivid description of conditions in those camps which he himself had visited. Beneš' inciting words; "Annihilate the Germans where you find them," broadcast from Košice, led to a wave of cruel murder. The bloody Sunday at Aussig in July 1945, the massacres in Saaz, Brüx and Landskron, the death march of Brünn are only some of those outrages for which the Czecho-Slovak government of that time will be held fully responsible.

The Sudeten Germans were outlawed. Before being expropriated their homes were open for pillage either under the pretext of a raid for hidden weapons or merely by groups of police guards or plain Czech plunderers. In some towns orders were issued that homes of Germans must not be locked. Strict curfew was imposed on them. They were forced to wear white badges so as to make them conspicuous. They were forbidden to use public conveyances and the sidewalks, visit restaurants, write letters, change places of residence. They were restricted for buying groceries and shopping in stores to certain hours of the day, and special ration cards discriminating against them were issued. Schools and kindergartens were closed to their children. Adult Germans were called up and transported to the interior of Bohemia to provide forced labor on farms, in mines, and industry, at first without pay, later at low wages that were seldom paid. Still worse was the treatment in prisons, where over-crowded cells, brutalities and disease, in addition to insufficient rations, increased the death toll.

Expulsions Were Planned

We know now that the Communists, by means of the expulsions, pursued the following objectives:

First: By eliminating the German element from the

area, they wished to hasten the Communization of those countries.

Second: In the depopulated regions, they wanted to introduce collective farms and state industrial enterprises fashioned after Russian Soviet examples before proceeding with those schemes on a general scale.

Third: The confiscated property was also to be used for bribery purposes, since destroying the sense of honesty turns into more pliable tools of immoral Communism.

Fourth: By inciting to violence and acts of cruelty against the Germans, the Communists and their collaborators hoped to build up hatred between the Germans and these Slavic peoples so as to make the latter wholly dependent on the alliance with Communist Russia.

Fifth: The German expellees were to create social disorder and to be a hotbed of Communism in overcrowded West Germany.

As to the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans, it may safely be said that this was not a spontaneous reaction of the Czech people against the German occupation of their country, but an act planned by Czech politicians in exile and carried out by the government of the so-called National Front with all possible haste before the large majority of the Czech people would have time to think twice about it. Presidential decrees were supposed to give the proceedings a cloak of legality. Quotations from some of these decrees will point toward the responsibility of the government of the so-called National Front.

First: Constitutional Decree of the President of the Republic of August 2, 1945:

Article 1

1. Czecho-Slovak citizens of German or Magyar nationality who acquired German or Magyar citizenship under the regulation of the foreign occupational forces shall have lost their Czecho-Slovak citizenship by so doing.

2. The other Czecho-Slovak citizens of German or Magyar nationality shall lose their Czecho-Slovak citizenship on the day when this decree will come into force.

Signed by Beneš, Fierlinger, Masaryk, Nosek, Svoboda.

Second: Decree of the President of the Republic of October 25, 1945:

Any immovable and movable property shall be confiscated without any compensation, to the benefit of the Czecho-Slovak Republic . . . which is . . . owned:

1. By German or Magyar legal persons; or
2. by natural persons of German or Magyar nationality.

Signed by the signers of the Košice program.

Third: Decree of the President of the Republic of January 21, 1946:

Article 1

1. With immediate effect and without compensation and for the purpose of the land reform such land property shall be confiscated as is owned by — (a) all persons of German or Magyar nationality without regard to their citizenship.

Signed by Beneš, Fierlinger, Nosek, Dr. Šrobár, Dr. Stránský, Duriš, Majer.

Fourth: Law of May 8, 1946, passed by the povisional National Assembly:

Article 1

Any act committed between September 30, 1938, and October 28, 1945, the object of which was to aid the struggle for liberty of the Czechs and Slovaks, or which represented due reprisals for actions of the occupation forces and their accomplices, is not illegal, even when such actions may otherwise be punishable by law.

Signed by Beneš, Fierlinger, Drtina, Svoboda.

The last mentioned parliamentary act, which I have added to the decrees, provided for a general amnesty for all crimes committed against Germans, Magyars, and anti-Communist Czechs and Slovaks and thus gave ex port facto a semblance of legality to the law of the jungle.

Expulsions a Violation of International Law

The expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from the homes which they had inhabited for a thousand years violated the principle of the right to self-determination of peoples. We should remember that this right was solemnly proclaimed by our own President Woodrow Wilson, who in his Mount Vernon address of July 4, 1918, declared:

The settlement of every question, whether of territory, of sovereignty, of economic arrangement or political relationship, must be upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the peoples immediately concerned.

It is well known that the U. S. Government has taken a prominent part in establishing this principle and in the development toward incorporating it into the law of nations. The expulsion of the Germans stands in direct contradiction to this great principle.

The U. S. Government was also strenuously opposed to arbitrary displacement of persons during both World Wars. We protested against the transfer during World War I of Belgian workers and condemned, as a grave violation of international law, the displacement during World War II of Poles and other peoples within the then Nazi orbit. We asserted the right to resettle in their home countries, of all displaced persons. As to our own fellow citizens of Japanese descent, temporarily displaced after Pearl Harbor from their homes near the Pacific Ocean, we reaffirmed by an act of Congress the right to their homes. Let me also point out that article 9 of the United Nations Human Rights Declaration of December 10, 1948, as regards arbitrary expulsion as contrary to international law and states that "no one shall be subject to arbitrary exile."

Also relevant, it would seem to me, is the **Convention on Genocide** of December 11, 1946, which declares to be a crime, under international law, (a) killing members of a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part. About 300,000 Sudeten Germans, that is, a considerable part of their total number, did not survive the removal from their ancient homeland, a fact which proves that they were victims of this crime.

Let me finally quote from the draft code, prepared in accordance with the resolution of November 21, 1947, of the United Nations General Assembly, to define "offenses against the peace and security of mankind" that would be

“crimes under international law, for which the responsible individuals shall be punished.” Article 2, paragraph 11, lists:

Inhuman acts such as murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, or persecutions, committed against any civilian population on social, political, racial, religious, or cultural grounds by the authorities of a state or by private individuals acting at the instigation or with the toleration of such authorities.

This adequately covers the expulsion of the Germans from Sudetenland as well as those from the German provinces east of the Oder-Neisse line, and from other parts of Eastern Europe, and proves it to be — let me here repeat the words of article 1 of the penal draft code — among the “crimes under international law, for which the responsible individuals shall be punished.”

Voices Raised Against the Expulsions

Many courageous persons have raised their voice against the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans. Even at the heyday of the so-called National Front regime, Rozsiewač, a (Czech) Catholic paper in Olmütz, dared to protest on October 31, 1945, against cruelties in internment camps and the rape of Sudeten German women; and in another newspaper, Obzory, Dr. Helena Koželuhová, a journalist, objected to the cruelties of the expulsion. Of course, such voices were quickly suppressed and Dr. Koželuhová, for instance, was forbidden to write another line — curiously by men who themselves are now in exile and professing to be anti-Communist.

While the Sudeten Germans have stood up for the right to return to their ancient homeland, they have expressly renounced any thought of vengeance on the Czech people.

The expellees publicly declared that they will support every endeavor toward a united Europe in which the peoples may live in freedom from fear and coercion. They called upon all nations and men of good will to join them in this great undertaking. Since then, the German expellees have persistently followed the policy to which their representatives had set hand and seal at Stuttgart in 1950. Rejecting Communist and neutralist temptations as well as appeals to

narrow nationalism, they are, today, perhaps the most dedicated adherents of a united Europe.

But the Sudeten Germans did not rest their case with a solemn declaration of faith. They took practical steps toward an agreement, on the basis of mutual respect and a genuine search for a real solution, with their Czech and Slovak neighbors, now also in exile. In 1950, an agreement in London with the Czech National Committee, headed by Army General Lev Prchala. The agreement recognizes the right to self-determination of both nations, Czechs and Sudeten Germans.

A realistic policy for Central as well as East Central Europe, that is, concerning Czecho-Slovakia and the Sudeten Germans, as well as concerning Poland, the Germans of East Prussia, and the other German provinces east of the Oder-Neisse Rivers can only be a policy that is both just and moral. It must be firmly based upon historical truth and the rule of international law. To assume that any government can ever develop a successful policy on the shaky structure of a wrong, and on perpetuating that wrong, is an illusion.

It is my considered opinion that the German expellees should be encouraged to stand firm upon their right. It is in the best tradition of American foreign policy to denounce the wrong and to uphold the right. Moreover, wavering would be tantamount to further tightening the stranglehold on the captive peoples by the Kremlin and would thus actually support Soviet imperialism.

Just as the Soviets dangled before the dizzy eyes of the Poles enticing bait of the German provinces east of the Oder-Neisse line, so the Czechs were being dazzled by Kremlin stooges with the rich spoils in the Sudetenland. To the same degree that the Poles accepted the German provinces, and the Czechs accepted the Sudeten properties out of the bloody hands of Stalin, they both permitted themselves to be chained to Moscow. This has been the fateful and deadly but logical result. Both the Czechs and Poles who think of keeping these spoils must continue to lean on Soviet Russian backing and thus render themselves subservient to the Kremlin.

SLOVAK NATIONALISM:**FEDERATIVE TENDENCIES OF SLOVAK
NATIONALISM****B. S. BUC, Ph.D.****1. The Struggle For Survival**

The most characteristic effort, underlying all the undertakings of re-awakened Slovak nationalism, is the attempt to gain recognition of national individuality first in Austria-Hungary and then in Czecho-Slovakia. Both of these states — Hungary under the pretense of the thousand-year common life of Slovaks within its confines and Czecho-Slovakia under the guise of Slav tribal kinship — pursued a similar aim, namely, to break the will of the Slovaks after they had developed their own national character and to enrich their own collectivity with Slovaks.

When we take into consideration that the Slovaks appeared on the modern scene as an almost unknown political factor, we will realize that obstacles, which stood and at present still stand in the way of their political ambitions, were and are continually great. Slovak nationalism, therefore could not reckon with the rapid achievement of independence in its own state. For that reason it had no direct aim in its program to break those state ties in which it found itself. It fought only for the change of its internal structure in such a way that its life would not be menaced. If it became an element of dissolution of state ties, this was more the result of external circumstances which occasioned the break rather than of internal efforts. In such case, Slovak nationalism was, therefore, forced to choose between two alternatives: to maintain its original ties and live in continual dread of losing its national individuality; or to accept a new solution, promising greater possibilities for its own development.

Thus, external circumstances caused Slovak nationalism to become one of the elements of dissolution, first of Austria-Hungary, in 1918, and later of Czecho-Slovakia in 1938. Neither of those states were dissolved as the result of an

internal revolution, even if conditions for such action were favorable, but rather through the decisions of external agents who were interested in the creation of a different and more favorable form of Central Europe. In each instance an unexpected opportunity presented itself to Slovak nationalism for a near revolutionary transition to more favorable conditions.

One can observe, however, that in its foundations Slovak nationalism manifests greater tendencies toward federative living with other nations in the Central European sphere of influence than toward its own sovereign statehood. The thought of a federated Central Europe, in one form or another, underlies all efforts of Slovak nationalism and is, of course, the principal aim of the entire Slovak struggle for self-preservation.

2. Federation Rather Than Dissolution of Austria-Hungary

In general, the reason for the dissolution of Austria-Hungary rested in the many nationalities that were dissatisfied with this empire. On the other hand, it is also true that shortly before the First World War, the nations of Austria-Hungary as well as the Western Democracies saw in Habsburg Monarchy their best guarantee against German and Russian imperialism. The nations, therefore, opposed very sharply all assimilative efforts of this state, not, however, at the cost of its dissolution. They remembered that the origin of Austria-Hungary was not so much the result of the political genius of the Habsburgs, but rather of the political, economical, and geographical conditions of the Central European sphere of influence. Austria-Hungary was regarded, therefore, as one of the main component parts of the political equilibrium in Europe.

This supposition was wholly correct. With the displacement of Austria-Hungary, the European equilibrium was broken to the detriment of those nations which lived within its confines. All federative efforts in Central Europe tend principally to the formation of Austria-Hungary, not, however, in the form of the former Habsburg Monarchy, but on the basis of economical, geographical, and political expedients of that part of Europe, of which it was a political representative for several centuries.

The first attempts of the nations of Austria-Hungary for a revived nationalism proceeded no further than its federation. Scarcely any other nation in Austria-Hungary manifested a greater impatience with the latter's politics than the Czechs; and even they proclaimed through the lips of their most renowned historian Francis Palacky: "If Austria did not exist, we would have to create it!" This same Czech historian, writing to the German revolutionary congress in Frankfurt-on-the-Main in 1848, said:

"The preservation of Austria — its integrity and solidification — is and must be the great and important concern not only of the Czech nation, but of the whole Europe, nay, of all humanity and foreign lands" (1).

Even Dr. Edward Beneš, one of the principal creators of Czecho-Slovakia and later an unreconciled enemy of the Habsburgs, wrote in 1908:

"People often speak about the dissolution of Austria. I absolutely do not believe in it. The historical and economic ties, which mutually unite the nations of Austria, are too strong to allow Austria to collapse" (2).

From the revolutionary years of 1848, the thought of federating Austria-Hungary was the foremost political goal of all nationalities of this monarchy, and was even accepted sympathetically by the imperial court itself. But after the so-called agreement with the Hungarians (Magyars) in 1867, the Habsburgs gave precedence to the forceful solution of the national problem by applying coercive methods of assimilation. This came as a disappointment to the other nationalities and increased greatly their movements toward complete emancipation. It made them to forget the historical and economic ties which bound them to the Habsburg monarchy and moved them to work for its dissolution.

The federation of Austria-Hungary was demanded by the changed views of society, which the philosophy of the Enlightenment and Romanticism had created. These new views emphasized the principle of plurality instead of the former principle of unity, the principle of individual liberty instead of the principle of unreserved obedience to state authority. Had the Habsburgs recalled this great change in the thinking of people, they would certainly have held their

empire together even if they would have changed its former autocratic foundation.

In accord with the other nationalities of Austria-Hungary, the aim of all Slovak undertakings was the federation of Austria-Hungary. The Slovaks publicly emphasized the thought of federation, first in a memorandum which they presented to the emperor at Vienna, in 1861, and then at the nationality congress in Budapest, in 1867. At the second nationality congress which was held on August 10, 1895, also in Budapest, during a time of great persecutions,

"the Rumanians, Serbs and Slovaks, who assembled in Budapest (wrote the *Neue Freie Presse*) demand the division of Hungary into ethnic self-administrative units, which in effect is equal to the demand to abolish the union between Hungary and Transylvania, to renew the Serbian Duchy and create a self-administrative Slovakia, such as Hurban promoted already thirty years earlier" (3).

The unwillingness of Budapest and Vienna to meet these demands led not only the Slovaks but also other nationalities to accept willingly such solutions to their problem that prepared the way for the complete dissolution of Austria-Hungary. The offer of this new solution came chiefly from the Western Democracies during the First World War even despite the fact that, in the West, Austria-Hungary was considered as late as 1903 as **"the only barrier, sufficiently strong, at the beginning of the 20th century, which could discourage German ambitions the day when these would begin to threaten the European balance"**(4).

During the First World War, however, it became apparent that Austria-Hungary proceeded in a completely opposite direction, that is, it abetted the ambitions of Germany. Western Democracies, therefore, decided to dissolve it. The greatest influence came from the "American crusading spirit," which, in the form of Wilson's idealistic principle of self-determination of nations, gave the nationalities an unforeseen moral weapon.

Austria-Hungary comprised such a mixture of nationalities that the realization of the principle of self-determination was impossible without repeating the situation of Austria-Hungary would — and that in a much worse form — in new national states along national lines.

In the new states which had risen out of the ashes of

Austria-Hungary, the burden of power passed from rulers to subordinates, while the political order remained as it was. The former national chauvinism of antagonism began to disintegrate the cohabitation of Central European nations more than ever before and opened the way for the repeated aggrandizement of German imperialism.

3. The Goal of the Slovak Autonomist Movement: A Federated Czecho-Slovakia

It was self-evident that, as soon as suppositions for arranging Central Europe upon a new basis emerged, the Slovaks would accept this solution enthusiastically. They found an opportunity to free themselves from their "thousand-year slavery," by which term they referred to their life within the confines of Hungary after the downfall of Greater Moravia in 906. They joined with the Czechs to form one state under the condition that Czecho-Slovakia would be a federated state. This federation was guaranteed by two agreements between Czechs and Slovaks in the United States, in Cleveland in 1915, and then in Pittsburgh in 1918.

At the Peace Conference, in 1919, even Dr. Edward Beneš promised this in the name of the Czecho-Slovak Government when he stated that:

"it is the intention of the Czecho-Slovak Government to create the organization of the state by accepting as a basis of natural rights the principles applied in the constitution of the Swiss Republic a sort of Switzerland..." (5).

Immediately with the rise of Czecho-Slovakia, the lure of might showed itself more powerful for the Czech majority than the ideals of national equality and rights. For this reason they began to organize a new state on the basis of the principle of power, applying the narrowest centralization.

Dr. Ferdiš Juriga, one of the most eminent representatives of Slovak nationalism, opposed those Czech propensities on the floor of Parliament in Prague on January 28, 1920, in the following words:

"We must tend to decentralization, toward self-administration, so that the Republic might develop on a federalistic basis, because federalism is the system of the future. We must preserve our individuality and not let ourselves be absorbed. Federation is not only in the interest of our nation and the Czecho-Slovak Republic, but it also

answers the spirit of all mankind. It is an all-human tendency, the tendency of all mankind, this tendency to validate oneself to develop, to which every individual person and every national unit should have the right, which should crystalize out into a legal personality, so that these various nations could then become federalized in one great world republic. This would be the highest ideal and the path that leads to it is: federalism" (6)

His position was a bit idealistic, but he expressed correctly the modern effort to arrange the cohabitation of nations on a pluralistic basis in the sense of the principle of equality. We have already said that the dissolution of Austria-Hungary must be charged to the lack of respect for this voice of the times. Czecho-Slovakia, which along national lines was only a worse copy of Austria-Hungary, gave precedence also to such a way. According to C. A. Macartney,

"the Slovaks therefore reacted in the form of a flamboyant Slovak nationalism which was a main reason for the absence of revolt with which they accepted the dissolution of the Czecho-Slovak State"(7.)

Despite the fact that Slovaks were co-creators of Czecho-Slovakia with the Czechs, they attracted to themselves all the national minorities and together with Germans, Hungarians, Poles, and Ruthenians fought against the so-called imperialism of Prague, as in former times, under Austria-Hungary, they fought with Czechs, Serbs, Croats, and Rumanians against the imperialism of Budapest and Vienna. In this struggle, the main issue at stake was the change of the internal structure of Czecho-Slovakia in the sense of former promises and agreements — and not in its dissolution.

When in 1939 Czecho-Slovakia fell under the heel of Hitler's Germany, however, the Slovaks found the way open to the creation of their own state, which was the only way out under the given political circumstances as well as the logical conclusion of their former national endeavors. The short-lived existence of this independent state gave to the Slovak nationalism what it had hitherto lacked, namely, a uniform will to live independently and a conviction that it will know how to stand its ground as an equally worthy member among the other nations.

4. Slovak Planners of a Federated Central Europe

Slovak nationalism did not strive alone for the federation of those states with which it had ties, but also manifested great energies to raise the entire sphere of Central Europe upon a federated basis. The idea of a federated Central Europe was ever popular with the Slovaks, not simply because it assured the maintenance of certain sovereign prerogatives, as among other established nations, but principally it seemed to provide a surer guarantee for the protection of their threatened national individuality. Slovaks of all political convictions not only joined all federative efforts, but also presented several propositions for solving the problem of Central Europe in the sense of a federation.

Perhaps the most renowned figure in this field was Dr. Milan Hodža, at first Minister of Agriculture and then Premier of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. He devoted his whole life to this idea. He draws motives for his endeavors from the fact that,

"Small nations are liable to become a nuisance for world politics if they are isolated and beset by rivalries; but they are certainly sure to become precious elements of a fair and therefore indispensable balance of political forces, if they can prove themselves capable of taking a common view of those things which are common among them, especially when their geographical position renders them important"(8).

Dr. Hodža endeavored to develop cooperation between the Central European nations and the consolidation of the economic situation in this part of Europe. The climax of these endeavors was his "**Danube Plan,**" which aimed to create, according to Hodža's own words: "**one single, great economic unit in Central Europe.**" This was to be attained by removing tariff barriers and establishing a customs union which would regulate agriculture and industrial production, and reorganize the system of payments and transportation, etc. (9).

Another Slovak plan for solving the Central European problem is the proposal for confederation originating with Dr. Ferdinand Ďurčanský, the first Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Slovak Republic during the Second World War. Dr. Ďurčanský developed his plan for the confederation of Central Europe at the beginning of 1944 in studies

which were published in the "**Revue de droit international, de sciences diplomatiques et politiques**" in Geneva. He favors confederation chiefly to ward off every danger, which is said to threaten the sovereignty of small nations whenever they become a part of greater political bodies. According to Dr. Ďurčanský, confederation

"gives guarantees of independence and freedom to the nations of Central Europe, enables a solution of incidental disputes which could arise between the individual states of the confederation and, on the other hand, could defend Central Europe against external attacks" (10).

Up to the present time, however, attempts for the federation of Central Europe have not ripened into practical results, whether their proponents were Slovaks or members of other nations. The reason of their failure, as stated by Dr. Edward Beneš, "are much more of a sentimental, psychological, and moral nature than of a political and economic nature" (11).

It is difficult to foretell at the present time whether the nations of Central Europe will be able to reach some settlement of their mutual differences and unite for the sake of their own preservation. The present tragedy of Central Europe brings even the most extreme elements to realize that some kind of federation is the "categorical imperative" for that sector of the world.

(1) Dr. Joseph Kirschbaum: **Slovakia and Central-European Federation Plans**, Slovakia, April 1953, p. 3.

(2) **Le probleme Autrichien et la question Tchèque**, Paris., 1908, p. 307.

(3) Aurel Popovici. **Die Vereinigten Staaten von Grossoestreich**, Leipzig, 1906, p. 43.

(4) Henry Rene: **Questions d'Autriche-Hongrie et Questions d'Orient**, Paris, 1903, p. 126.

(5) Lloyd George: **The Truth About the Peace Treaties**, London, 1925, p. 337.

(6) Karol Sidor, **Slovenská politika na pôde pražského snemu**, Bratislava, 1943, Vol I, p. 69.

(7) **Problems of the Danube Basin**, London, 1942, p. 122.

(8) Dr. Milan Hodža: **Federation in Central Europe**. London, 1942, p. 75.

(9) *Ibid.*, pp. 131-133.

(10) **Revue de droit international, de sciences diplomatiques et politiques**. XXII, annee, No. I, p. 23-52.

(11) "**Le probleme de l'Europe Central**," **Sources et documents tchecoslovaques**, No. 24, p. 47.

THE SLOVAKS AND THEIR NEIGHBORS

God had willed it that the Slovaks settle in Central Europe, in the valleys of the Váh, Nitra, Hron, and Ipel, Ondava and Laborec. The land of the Slovaks is watered by the huge waves of the Danube which flows in the south for a hundred miles. The Morava river in the west and the Tisa in the east make contact with Slovakia. Altogether 97% of the rivers and streams of Slovakia flow south into the Danube and the Tisa rivers — only the Dunajec wends its way north to the Visla and the Baltic Sea.

The Slovak mountains, the Carpathians, rise on the northern borders, and therefrom to the south we find hills and valleys of natural and romantic beauty. In the High and Low Tatra Mountains there are deep lakes and very beautiful bathing and recreational spots.

In the valleys there are inexhaustible mineral springs. Practically three-quarters of Slovakia is covered with forests and hills. Rich, fertile land, however, makes up much of the land in the east, south, and west.

Slovakia is in fact a Eucharistic country. The wheat grown there provides the daily bread for the Slovaks just as it does for the Sacred Hosts they receive so frequently. Grapes provide refreshment for man and the wine necessary for the altars of the land. In the mountains there is an invaluable supply of green gold—thick forests of beech, oak, and pine trees. The rivers of the valleys abound in various kinds of fish, and in the bowels of the earth there are ice caverns and gold, coal, antimony, magnesite, naphtha, and mineral waters.

Slovakia has a population of four million made up of Slovaks for the most part. Before 1946 quite a number of Germans, Ukrainians, Poles and Magyars had settled in Slovakia, but today, after the forced expulsion of the Germans and Magyars by Dr. Edward Beneš and his regime, the Germans and Magyars form a negligible portion of the population. Hundred of thousands of Czechs, the so-called "reliable" element, have been settled there by the pro-Soviet Czech regime. At least 80% of the total population is of the Catholic religion. Protestants and Jews

make up the rest of the population. There are practically no Slovaks without religious affiliation in Slovakia even at the present time even though religion is scorned by the Czech pro-Soviet regime.

Slovaks emigrated in large numbers before 1918, during the administration of the Magyars, and in appreciable numbers even during the reign of the Czechs from 1918 to 1938. At least one-third of the Slovaks settled in America, Canada, and South America during that time. Emigration stopped completely after the Slovak parliament of autonomous Slovakia proclaimed the independence of Slovakia on March 14, 1939. It is noteworthy that the Slovak Republic did not depend on foreign loans: Slovakia depended entirely on her own resources and proved her viability and economic independence during the six years of her independence (1939-1945).

Adherence To Christian Culture

It was only natural that the Slovaks were always on good terms with their neighbors: they had been guided by western Christian culture for over a thousand years. The church of Prince Pribina, built in 831, is still a part of the beautiful Nitra Cathedral. The Slovaks not only learned and preached Christianity, but actually lived it. They love God above all else, as taught by their apostles, Sts. Cyril and Methodius, served the true Church of Jesus Christ, and loved their neighbors in the same measure that they did themselves.

How did the Slovaks get along with their neighbors: the Austrians and Czechs in the west and northwest, the Poles in the north, the Ukrainians in the east, and the Magyars in the south?

Vienna, the capital of Austria, and Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, are just an hour's ride by auto from each other. In the old Austro-Hungarian empire, the Slovaks and the Austrians got along very well, their contacts were cordial. The Habsburg dynasty had its members crowned as kings in the St. Martin Home in Bratislava. After 1918, when the T. G. Masaryk and Dr. Edward Beneš Czechs took over the reigns of the newly formed Czecho-Slovak State,

the borders between Austria and Slovakia were closed; one needed a visa to cross the border. Later, this regulation was retracted and Slovaks and Austrians could travel at will between Vienna and Bratislava. This was a good neighborly relationship that was to the advantage of the Slovaks living in Vienna, or in Austria proper. There were some 80,000 Slovaks settled in Austria.

Politically, the Slovaks lived their own lives in Vienna. Recognized political and church leaders visited them regularly. Monsignor Andrew Hlinka, founder of the Slovaks People's Party and champion of Slovak freedom and independence, had cordial contacts not only with Slovak leaders in Austria, but with influential Austrians as well. Msgr. Dr. Joseph Tiso, President of the Slovak Republic, was educated in the Pazmaneum of Vienna, where the bishops of Hungary sent their most capable theologians for further priestly studies.

In 1938, when Austria ceased to exist as an independent State, the Slovaks continued their friendly relationship with the Austrians. The Slovaks certainly will never forget how the Austrians helped the Slovaks in 1945 when about 5,000 of them sought asylum in Austria, including President Tiso and the Slovak Government, after the Reds broke through to Ruthenia and the eastern part of Slovakia. And they are grateful today for the assistance still proffered to Slovak escapees. There is every reason to believe that after the Red scourge is removed from Slovakia, the Slovaks and the Austrians will have no trouble at all in getting along with each other.

The Moravians and the Czechs

On the northwest there is a 125-mile border that separates the Moravians and Czechs from the Slovaks. This border, however, during the existence of Austro-Hungary never was an obstacle to good relations between the local populations. This is understandable, since on both sides of this border are settled the descendants of a common Slovak tribe, many of whom even today call themselves "Moravian Slovaks". The latter were strongly attracted into the political, cultural, and economic sphere of the Czechs and par-

tially succumbed and accepted Czech culture and the Czech language. Nevertheless the "Moravian Slovaks" still cling to Slovak customs and habits and are as Catholic as the Slovaks on the other side of the border. Hussitism and Protestantism has made as little headway among them as among the Slovaks themselves.

From the times of Master John Hus, Comenius, and other Czech thinkers, therefore from the 15-16th centuries, Czech political ideology has strongly digressed from the traditions of King Saint Wenceslaus. It has divorced itself from them and has followed the path away from Rome and particularly from the pedagogical office of the Vatican. Havlíček, Masaryk, and Beneš made Hus a symbol of Czech pride and attempted to alter Czech history and remake the Czech nation in the image of John Hus which, of course, was in opposition to the Christian mind of Europe. The Movement "away from Rome", headed by Masaryk, Beneš, and other "enlightened and progressive" Czechs, gained momentum as soon as T. G. Masaryk and Dr. Edward Beneš took over the Hradčany in Prague. With their blessing and active support, the "Czecho-Slovak National Church" was established. There was nothing **Slovak** about it except the second part of its appellation: it was strictly a Czech enterprise which sought to destroy the Roman Catholic Church in the newly-baked political unit called Czecho-Slovakia; the Slovaks had nothing in common with it. In 1948 it was the first religious organization to willingly offer its collaboration to the Red cause. When the Czech National Church of Czecho-Slovakia (that is its real name) was founded, about a million Czech Catholics and some 360 Czech priests joined it, supporting thereby T. G. Masaryk's movement "away from Rome"!

It was only natural that this display of chauvinistic nationalism isolated the Czechs from the spirit of Catholic Europe and tragically ended in the willing acceptance of Russian Bolshevism under the leadership of Clement Gottwald, the successor of Masaryk and Beneš to the throne of the Czech kings at the Hradčany. In Europe it was only Prague, at that time still under the leadership of Dr. Edward Beneš, that really welcomed the Red conquerors of

the world and their Red Army in grand style as its liberators and the guarantor of its national, state and social life, of its growth and progress. Unfortunately Czech Catholic politics was never strong and vigorous enough to pursue its own course. Under the leadership of Monsignor John Šrámek, the politics of Czech Catholics was always subordinated to the basic lines of Czech national policy which it adopted and followed. The sad awakening came later when it was too late to do anything about it.

These facts, particularly the openly anti-Catholic policy of the Masaryk and Beneš regimes during the twenty-year cohabitation of the Slovaks and Czechs, were the cause of much friction and bad blood between them. In a word, the Slovaks did not trust the ruling Czechs and told them in no uncertain terms on many occasions that their policies would lead to the collapse of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. Making friends of the Russian Reds and enemies of immediate neighbors could hardly be termed wise politics. In many respects, however, the Slovaks gained much from the Czechs in its transitional period in their march to independence. Not, of course, at the price demanded by the Masaryk-Beneš Czechs, the surrender of their inherent right to freedom and independence, the repudiation of their own ethnic individuality.

We know that T. G. Masaryk and Dr. Edward Beneš had stated at the Paris Peace Conference that "the Czechs and the Slovaks are the same". The Slovaks, according to them were only a "branch" of the Czech nation, and the Slovak language was but a "dialect" of the Czech. While representatives of the Czechs propagated this "**Czecho-Slovak**" ideology that the Slovaks and Czechs were one ethnic unit, the Slovaks under the leadership of the Catholic Monsignors Andrew Hlinka and Dr. Joseph Tiso and the Protestant clergyman Martin Rázus replied that they could not accept this false ideology. The Slovaks, they said, never were and at no time felt that they are a "branch" of the Czech nation. They always were and still feel that they are a distinct ethnic unit, as are the other Slovanic nations. The Slovaks had no intentions of committing national sui-

cide when they decided to form a common political state with the Czechs in 1918.

The Masaryk-Beneš Czechs, however, continued to propagate the ideology that had no historical foundation in fact with all the propaganda means at their disposal, that is, with State funds and, therefore, ironically, even at the expense of the Slovaks. When Dr. Beneš visited Bratislava in 1933, he declared that the Slovaks had to accept the idea of an ethnic "Czecho-Slovak" nation in their own interest. "In the fight against us," he said, "the entire pressure shall go against Slovakia. Our relationship with Germany is good and correct and so it shall continue to remain in every case. Between us and the Germans there have not been and there shall not be any quarrels and difficulties about boundaries."

The events of 1938-1939, however, proved how wrong Beneš was. Pressure was exerted not against the Slovaks, but against the Czechs, because the relationship between the Czechs and the Germans never had been, as Beneš declared, "good and correct", but always bad and insincere. The historical record, as written, informed and impartial observers, is quite clear on this point. The resolution of this relationship was one of the causes of World War II. And what happened after 1945? With the help of Stalin, Dr. Edward Beneš resolved this problem of "good relations" with the Germans by brutally expelling more than three million Sudeten Germans for the "new people's Republic" of Czecho-Slovakia!

The Slovaks were opposed to the forced expulsion of the Germans from Czecho-Slovakia at that time and still adamantly condemn it. The responsibility for this shameful crime against humanity must be credited to the account of the foreign policy which Masaryk and Beneš initiated at the beginning of the Republic, the policy with which the Slovaks never identified themselves and, therefore, cannot be held responsible for it or its consequences. There was nothing Slovak about Czecho-Slovak foreign policy. During the entire life of the first Czecho-Slovak Republic (1918-1938), Dr. Edward Beneš, leader of the Czech National Socialists, was "Mr. Foreign Policy"! After twenty long years of the brand of democracy promulgated by the

Masaryk-Beneš Czechs, the relation between the two "closely related nations", the Slovaks and the Czechs, were strained to the limit. The Republic had to fall, because the majority of its population had been treated as second-rate citizens. It was a democracy only for the Czechs, but in the end not even a Czech could be found to fire a single shot in its defense!

After the sad experiences in the Czecho-Slovak Republic under the Masaryk-Beneš Czechs, the Slovaks do not even want to think about another common political state with them. Of course, Czecho-Slovakia still exists, but not because the Slovaks willed it so. The political will of the Slovak nation was utterly disregarded in 1945 by the victorious United Nations. "Away from Prague — back to Bratislava" is the cry of all Slovak nationals who are convinced now more than ever that the highest interests of the Slovak nation can best be safeguarded and secured only in an independent Slovak Republic.

A proper neighborly relationship on an international basis is, however, possible between the Slovaks and the Czechs, if it is allowed to develop under international supervision. But never again on an intra-state basis. The Slovaks remember the Pittsburgh Pact of 1918, which T. G. Masaryk himself had drafted and undersigned — and then repudiated completely. And they shall never forget the anti-Slovak policy of Masaryk's star pupil, Dr. Edward Beneš. In 1935, the latter promised Slovakia complete autonomy within a year, if the deputies of the Hlinka party would vote him in as president of the Republic. The Slovaks fulfilled their part of the given word, but Beneš did not. When they pressed him in 1936 to fulfill his promise, Dr. Beneš officially announced to the Hlinka Slovak People's Party that he must first grant autonomy to Ruthenia, because he was bound to do so by the peace treaty of St. Germaine and the Constitution of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. But nothing happened: Ruthenia, like Slovakia, continued to be regarded as a colony of the Beneš Czechs.

President Hácha, the constitutional successor of Dr. Beneš, is responsible for the March, 1939, military putsch in Slovakia, whereby an attempt was made to repudiate

the rights of autonomous Slovakia. The latter, we know, was granted autonomy by Prague on October 6, 1938. And what did Gottwald, the Czech Red, do later? In Košice, in 1945, he proclaimed that the Czecho-Slovak Republic "must" safeguard and cultivate the right of the Slovaks—but in 1948, when he succeeded Beneš as president, Gottwald proceeded to repudiate all his promises, because Slovakia, he said, was anti-communist!

T. G. Masaryk, Dr. Edward Beneš, Dr. Hácha, Gottwald, Zápotocký, and Novotný—all presidents of Czecho-Slovakia — had promised the Slovaks a fuller life of freedom, but failed to fulfill their promises. Little wonder, then, that the Slovaks have completely lost their faith in leading representatives of Czech political life. Let the Czechs go their way, and let the Slovaks be free to develop and decide their own destiny—that is the sentiment of at least 95% of the Slovaks at home and in the free world. The Slovaks stand for a Central-European or an European Federation: let the Czechs join as an independent political unit, and the Slovaks likewise: but no more Czech domination!

The Slovaks and the Poles

In the course of the ages, the Slovaks had no serious trouble with the Poles. They were practically always on good terms with them and sympathized with them. In one of their first political manifestations, that of 1849 in Lip-tovský Svätý Mikuláš, the Slovaks expressly stated that they were for the realization of national and state rights of the Poles. And the Slovaks remember that the Poles made it possible for Msgr. Andrew Hlinka to travel in 1919 in an attempt to present the Slovak demands (the Pittsburgh Pact of 1918) to the Peace Conference. They were opposed to the solution of the problem of the Orava and Spiš Counties, whereby over twenty villages that had belonged to Slovakia for more than a thousand years were awarded to Poland at the Paris Peace Conference. The Slovaks were angered more at Beneš than at the Poles when they learned that Beneš had traded these villages for the coal fields of Tešín in Silesia. After that relations between the Slovaks and the Poles improved until 1938 when the Czecho-Slovak

Republic collapsed and the Poles again sought a revision of the Slovak-Polish frontier to protect themselves against a German attack from the south. At that time the Prague regime did not defend Slovakia, so the latter entered directly into negotiations with the Poles in October, 1938, where the Poles cut their demands to a minimum. More obstacles to better relations were removed during a conference with the Poles in Ružomberok in February, 1939.

Poland was among the first countries to recognize the independent Republic of Slovakia, after the Slovak Parliament proclaimed its independence of Prague on March 14, 1939. When Hitler and Stalin decided to partition Poland in 1939, many Poles emigrated through Slovakia, while many remained there throughout the war. They were given every courtesy; they had Slovak passes and were employed by private and state industry where they spent the worst years of the war and later left unmolested to fight for the liberation of Poland. The friendship of the Slovaks for the Poles was never approved by the Beneš Czechs in Prague who preferred to do business with Stalin at the expense of Poland and Slovakia.

The Slovaks and the Ukrainians

The border between Slovakia and Ruthenia is 40 miles long. Known as Sub-Carpathian Russia, Ruthenia today belongs to Soviet Ukraina which is a part of the Soviet Union. Dr. Edward Beneš and his pro-Soviet "provisional" government sold out the Ruthenians to Stalin in 1945. Slovakia today borders directly on the Soviet Union, and the Slovaks know that Ruthenia is administrated directly by Moscow. The old inhabitants of those parts have been transferred deep into Russia by Moscow, resettling the evacuated towns and villages with non-Slovanic elements from Asia.

The Slovaks were always on good terms with the original inhabitants. The history of the Slovaks and the Ruthenians had much in common; both had suffered the heavy hand of foreign rulers for centuries. In October, 1938, representatives of Ruthenia came to Žilina to confer with the Slovaks. It was there that they said: we have lived for cen-

turies on good terms with the Slovaks; we fought for 20 years within the Czecho-Slovak framework to gain autonomy as the Slovaks did; we shall go along with the Slovaks also in the future; if the Slovaks tie their future with the Czechs, we shall do so; if, however, the Slovaks should proclaim their independence of the Czechs and shall be for an independent Slovak State, we also shall declare our separation from Prague and proclaim an independent Republic of Carpatho-Ukraine.

And that is exactly what happened. The Slovaks proclaimed their State independence on March 14, 1939, in Bratislava, while the deputies of Ruthenia did the same thing on the same day in Chust. True, they enjoyed independence only 24 hours, because Ruthenia was incorporated into Hungary on the basis of an agreement between Hitler and the Magyars. After World War II, because of a secret agreement, Beneš surrendered Ruthenia and its people to Stalin. After World War II, because of a secret agreement, Beneš surrendered Ruthenia and its people to Stalin.

The Slovaks and the Magyars

The longest border between Slovakia and any other neighboring country is that between Slovakia and Hungary; it is 312 miles long. The Hungarian State originated from the ruins of the first Slovak State—the Great Moravian Empire—after 907 A. D. St. Stephen, King of Hungary, made Christians of the pagan Magyars and tied them spiritually to Rome. Believing that a “uni-lingual state is weak”, St. Stephen did not allow the Magyar language or any other language to be the official language of the state, but established Latin as the official language and so conserved, like an ice pack, all the living languages of the inhabitants of Hungary. It was only at the beginning of the last century that Latin was replaced by Magyar as the official language of the State.

Unhealthy chauvinism began to spread the Magyar tongue at the expense of the native Slovak. The result was that the Slovaks revolted against the dominating Magyars over a hundred years ago, in 1848. Disregarding the admonition of St. Stephen about an one-language State, the Ma-

gyars pressed for one "Hungarian" nation with Magyar as the official language "from the Carpathians to the Adriatic Sea". The partition of Hungary in 1918 was due to excessive Magyar nationalism which made enemies of all the other nationalities of the realm.

Before 1918, the Magyars accused the Slovaks of being Pan-Slavs. After 1918, the Masaryk-Beneš Czechs accused the Slovaks of being Magyarones. While the Magyars fostered hatred of the Slovanic nations, the Czechs on the other hand propagated hatred of the Magyars among the Slovaks and Czechs. Excessive chauvinism prompted both movements. Many of the younger Slovak set succumbed to the anti-Magyar propaganda of official Prague and only later discovered that thereby the Masaryk-Beneš Czechs wanted to conceal their own real goal: the Czechization of the Slovak nation. The Magyar "Hungarian nation-state from the Carpathians to the Adriatic" became for the Czechs "a united **Czechoslovak** nation from Šumava to the Tatras". Obviously the Czechs learned nothing from past history—and ended up just as did the Magyars: alone and hated by the non-Czech citizens and by all their neighbors.

When the Slovaks declared their independence of Prague in 1939, the Magyars recognized the independent Republic of Slovakia de jure and established diplomatic contacts forthwith. Of course, the Slovaks were crudely jarred by the Vienna negotiations of Ribbentrop and Ciano in 1938, whereby the Magyars were favored with about one-third of Slovak territory (Vienna Award). After 1945 these southern regions were returned to Slovakia so that Beneš could expel the Magyars from them in exchange for Slovaks settled in Hungary proper. The Beneš Czechs are alone responsible for the brutalities committed during the forced "transfer" of Magyars from Slovak territory. The Slovaks condemned this forced transfer of Magyars as strongly as they did the brutal expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from Bohemia.

The Hungarian National Council, under the leadership of Monsignor Béla Varga, has recognized the inherent right of the Slovak nation to freedom and independence. Cordial contacts have been established with Slovaks in exile and

there is every reason to believe that the Slovaks and Magyars shall be able to come to an understanding when the Iron Curtain is lifted for benefit of both nations and in the common interests of all free peoples.

In Conclusion

It is a matter of historical record that the Slovaks always tried to get along with neighboring nations, at times even at the expense of Slovak interests. They realize that quarrels and chauvinistic desires settle nothing and simply cause trouble, not only for the nations concerned, but for all free nations. Today all the nations behind the Iron Curtain are, so to speak, in the same boat, suffering under the Red heel of communism. The Slovak nation as a whole has been adamantly opposed to the ideology of Marxist socialism for over a hundred years. The Slovaks are a small nation, but as partners with other European nations they can do much to destroy the greatest evil of our time, the enemy of all humanity: Communism. Let's encourage them to do that!

(K. S.)

• • •

CASTLES OF SLOVAKIA

KRÁSNA HÔRKA

By Hubert Macko, OSB.

Krásna Hôrka (Mount Beautiful) is one of the few fortresses of Slovakia in a good state of preservation. As the name itself suggests, it is beautiful in its ancient splendor, standing atop a hill where the valleys of Šajava and Čermošne meet in Gemer. Perched on a steep hill in a very picturesque setting, proud and unconquered by time and the elements, it is indeed a jewel of the golden days that were. In Gemer they still sing: "Krásna Hôrka, pyšný zámok..." (Mount Beautiful, proud fortress).

Of its beginning we have no record. It is mentioned in the annals of Slovak fortresses as early as 1341; it was called "Kastrum Krasnohorka" and was owned by the Bebek family. There seemed to be some dispute as to the ownership of the fortress, a dispute that lasted a full 50

years. Dominic Bebek must have won the dispute because he is mentioned as the owner in the year 1352. The family took good care of the fortress, kept it in good repair and, from time to time, added new buildings.

In the year 1441 John of Brandys besieged the fortress as well as all surrounding fortresses, and held it for some twenty years. Then came the Czech Hussites, who took the fortress and made it impregnable. Later on the fortress became the property of Stephen Bebek. In 1514 Bebek and Zápoľský put down an insurrection of the peasants. When John Bebek fell in the famous battle of Mohács in 1526, Francis Bebek became the owner of Krásna Hôrka. He made counterfeit coins from the metal of bells that he stole from the surrounding churches. He was helped in this infamous work by the owner of Muráň Castle.

When Bebek felt the earth falling under his feet, he informed against Baša, the owner of Muráň. The court ordered Baša apprehended and appointed Bebek as head of the expedition to carry out the order. Later on he was caught by a shepherd and brought to Bebek, who sentenced him to death.

When Bebek took over the fortress, he repaired and fortified it. Later on he again plied his nefarious trade as counterfeiter and cast his lot with John Zápoľský, an enemy of the emperor. When the emperor learned this, he sent his army against Bebek, but Bebek defeated the royal army. Not feeling safe in the fortress, Bebek left it and took up his residence at the Court of King Zigmund. The mother of King Zigmund, proving that Bebek was a traitor, had him killed in the year 1552. The fortress then became the property of the emperor's commander, Lazarus Schwendi. Bebek's son, George, casting his fortunes with the emperor, became the possessor of the fortress in 1557.

In the year 1560 George Bebek was captured by the Turk, Hasan, and sent to Constantinople where he was a prisoner for five years. Enlisting the sympathy of King Zigmund and promising him life-long support, he was freed and became the commander-in-chief of all the armies of King Zigmund. It was not long after this that he gave up his high position and again began to worm himself

into the good graces of the emperor. He did not succeed. He died in Transylvania without issue; and with him died the last of the Bebek family, which owned Krásna Hôrka for some 300 years.

In 1556 the fortress became the property of the crown, and to the year 1580 it was administered by various captains of the king. In that year the famous Peter Andrásy became its administrator. The Andrásy family is well known in Slovakia; some of its descendants are still living there.

During the Rákóczi uprising, Stephen Andrásy helped Rákóczi, was named general of a part of the army that defeated the emperor's forces at Ráb. The fortress was again repaired and fortified, but the management was turned over to Andrásy's wife, neé Serédi, and to his children. After a colorful career, full of intrigue, Stephen Andrásy died. His son, Francis, became owner, but leaving no direct descendants, the fortress passed into the possession of his nephew Charles, who became a general in the army of Mária Theresa with the title of Count.

In 1847, when the fortress was destroyed by lightning and fire, it was completely repaired. Later on Dyonisius Andrásy became the owner of the fortress. He married a commoner, a Bohemian girl, Frances Hablavec. Both were very good to their subjects and showed great concern for the fortress, keeping it in very good repair. Today the fortress is a museum and contains many treasures of days gone by.

• • •

WHO SAID IT?

Beneš's trip (to Moscow) is the Czechoslovak contribution to the structure of world peace. All decent people are rejoicing, because it is a victory for democracy, the triumph of a good cause. . . The Soviet Czechoslovak Treaty is for him a great satisfaction. It is a great victory of the Czechoslovak cause. It is a gigantic contribution to the structure of a happier Europe. It is the solid foundation to lasting peace of the world. It is a great victory of Beneš's politics." — **Editorial, NEW YORKSKÝ DENNÍK Czechoslovak daily in Slovak language**), Dec. 15, 1943.

SLOVAKIA'S LIFELINE WITH THE WEST

Dr. Ferdinand Ďurčanský

Slovakia's political plight is more difficult than that of the other countries caught behind the iron curtain because Slovakia is ruled not only by Prague, but also by Moscow, thus suffering under a double yoke. The fight of the Slovak people against tyranny and oppression is a two-front fight. There is no doubt that there are communists in Slovakia, but their number and their possibilities are so limited that they cannot impose their rule on the Slovak population without the Czech Communists. It is no mere coincidence that the first secretary of the Communist Party in Slovakia, the most powerful man in the country, is the Czech Karel Bacílek. Key positions in the party and in the state apparatus are also held by Czechs. Even when it is considered expedient to place "comrades" from Slovakia in important positions in the party, state apparatus, or labor unions, these are very often persons of other than Slovak descent.

To acquire a deeper insight into this strong adhesion of Prague to Moscow, it is important to realize that the two nations are not only related by Communist, but also by the Pan-Slavic aims. Prague's objectives in ruling Slovakia are supported by Moscow at every turn. Czecho-Slovakia, falsely presented to the West by Edward Beneš and his collaborators as a dam against Muscovite pressure, has in reality been nothing more than a springboard between Soviet Russia and the West since 1945. As early as World War II, technical politicians-in-exile, with Beneš at their head, determined to work most intimately with Moscow and the Communists, knowing quite well that the Slovaks and the Sudeten Germans would offer resistance to any future domination by Prague. Tangible evidence of this Prague-Moscow liaison is the Moscow-signed treaty between the two governments on December 12, 1943. The Kremlin even used this as a model for later treaties concluded in the building up of its satellite system in Central Europe. This act of Beneš, long before Yalta agreements of February 11, 1945, shows that the Czechs were not a victim of Yalta policies

but its precursors, paving the way for sure support of the Soviet Union in dominating Slovakia and the Sudetenland.

Moscow strove during World War II to win over Slovak patriots for Communist collaboration by a ruse calling for Slovak independence. Responsible Slovak government officials refused this bait, whereupon the Kremlin sold out Slovakia to Prague. It would be false to speak of Czecho-Slovakia as having been taken over by the Kremlin by force, for the majority of the Czech people — under Dr. Edward Beneš — declared themselves in agreement with the satellite status of the “legal” introduction into the country of the Communist regime, not in February 1948 as is claimed, but back in 1945. This explains the closely knit relationship between the Czechs and the Soviets as well as the unique nationalistic aspect of the Communist Party in Czecho-Slovakia.

To shed further and perhaps more piercing light — if such be needed — on the tight linkage between Prague and the Kremlin, it should be noted that in every controversy between the Kremlin despots and other Communists, Prague always supports Moscow against the others. It is significant that Beneš's envoy to the United Nations, Dr. Ján Papánek, voted with the U. S. S. R. on practically all major issues. When misunderstanding and tensions arose, in 1948, between Moscow and Belgrade, the Prague Communist leaders had the main say in the resultant inflammatory campaign of the Soviets against Tito. During the crisis between Warsaw and Moscow in October, 1956, Prague lined up for Khrushchev against Gomulka. When on October 23, 1956, the Hungarian people revolted against Communist tyranny, Prague immediately opposed Imre Nagy in favor of the greatest possible military intervention by the Soviets in Hungary. Not only did Prague let the Soviet military units pass through Slovakia but did all it could to guarantee them unmolested transit in the face of popular indignation. Prague even intervened militarily itself along part of the frontier. When Soviets units imposed the Kadar government of the Hungarians, Prague tried from the first moment on to strengthen its position both politically and economically as far as possible.

Vanguard of Soviet Imperialism

When, after the 20th Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the motto of de-Stalinization, a certain easing up of dictatorship was introduced and partial reinstatement took place for some of the victims of Stalinist lawlessness and measures of violence — not only in the Soviet Union but also in the satellites — the Communist clique in Prague refused to be influenced thereby and remained completely passive. The Slovak “Ti-toists”, the only kind there are in present Czecho-Slovakia, have thus far not been reinstated. On the contrary, as a symbol of Stalinist intransigency and loyalty to his methods, Stalin’s illuminated statue shines out over Prague after dark.

By the election of Antonín Novotný, first party secretary of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia, to the position of president of the republic, Moscow’s most faithful servant has become the all-powerful viceroy of the Kremlin despots in the Č-SR. The logical conclusion is that just as Moscow rulers could rely on Prague’s Communist leaders in the past, so they shall rely upon them even in the future. Prague despots identify their own Czech interests not only with the Communist aims of Moscow but consider themselves a vanguard of Russian imperialism.

Further evidence of Prague’s loyalty to Moscow is seen continually in its indiscriminate abetting of all the latter’s foreign political aims. It backs up more rigidly than any other satellite Moscow’s anti-Adenauer campaign and endeavors to cement the position of the Soviet Zone government in the eastern half of Germany. In the United States, Prague’s henchmen seek every opportunity to oppose the perpetuation of a status quo in Asia and Africa and favor the separation of those areas from the sphere of influence of the European powers. Prague has gone so far as to train Asiatics and Africans to become Communist agents and by shipments of arms has gone far to create the insecurity and unrest that prevail in the Near East, Africa, and Asia.

Prague Communist rulers have mobilized the vast industrial potential and the capabilities of the people in lands within Czecho-Slovakia to aid Moscow’s economic offensive

in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and — disregarding the drop in the standard of living of their own population — have pursued this aim indefatigably. By means of Communist-schooled advisers, labor unionists and experts, who are employed in installing of industrial plants in these lands, Prague creates seats of unrest in these areas and helps incorporate them into the Moscow sphere of influence. In short, Prague consistently and persistently aids and abets the world-power objectives of the Soviet Union.

Ever since 1945 a policy of violence has been exercised against the Slovaks by the Prague government. In May, 1947, the then head of that government, Klement Gottwald, threatened Slovak patriots and asserted that it was a matter of duty to "persecute, ideologically and politically, and if need be administratively, the remaining People's Party separatists in Slovakia who are a source of dissent within Czecho-Slovakia." Shortly thereafter he spoke the words: "Today, in every respect, Slovakia is the weakest link in the Republic". Attempts have been made time and again to break the resistance of the Slovak population to Communism by resorting to deportations, acts of violence, concentration camps and a wide variety of oppressive measures customary within Communist countries. Since 1945 more than one-half million persons have been taken from Slovakia and scattered throughout the entire Sudetenland as workers in mines, factories, and agricultural associations, and about 250 thousand Czechs have been resettled into Slovakia as key figures in party and State administration, in agriculture, and the security apparatus, as well as Czech military units which represents pillars of the regime.

It suffices to look at the map of Central Europe to see that Slovakia, by dint of her position between Hungary and Poland, on the one side, and the fact that she serves as link for the Bohemian lands and the Soviet Union, on the other side, — while bordering on the free world in the West through Austria — has a key position in the Danubian area.

Slovak independence is not only in harmony with the wishes of the population, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the ideals of democracy and of human

progress, but the interests of the free world. It is to the advantage of freedom-loving people to support the Slovak people's fight for freedom. The independence of Slovakia means a weakening of Prague, a weakening of the Communist empire.

Since World War II, the free world, misled by false hopes, has expected the Kremlin rulers to be satisfied with the status quo and desist from any further aggression. This has caused the powers that were victorious in that war to take a positive stand only with respect to the pro-Communist and pro-Soviet political trends from behind the Iron Curtain while turning a cold shoulder to the principal opponent of Communism and Russian imperialism. It is this policy of the western powers and not Soviet military victories — that explains Moscow's success. Because of this unfortunate policy, Moscow's lust for power has been whetted to such a degree that today Khrushchev regards as a matter of course the recognition by the free world of the status quo which the Soviets arrived at by violence and fraud — and in fact, he demands such recognition.

The free world fails to see that by supporting the traditional but artificial structure known as "Czecho-Slovakia", it is acting in opposition to its own interests. As long as Prague can continue to throttle Slovakia, the lifeline that feeds the spirit of freedom among the Slovak people runs the grave danger of being cut off from the West forever.

• • •

WHO SAID IT?

"On this, the twenty-seventh anniversary of the founding of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, may I express on behalf of Secretary Hull and myself sincere felicitations to you. We may all look forward with full confidence to an early victory over the Nazi barbarians and the establishment of an enduring and just peace built on the firm foundations of cooperation and mutual understanding which have been wrought so firmly in the crucible of war." — Edward R. Stettinius, Acting Secretary of State in cablegram sent to V. M. Molotov, Nov. 6, 1944.

RICHARD WEISHAR

THE ROOTS OF COMMUNISM IN THE Č-SR

IF ONE TAKES THE TROUBLE to examine events preceding the February, 1948, "coup d'état" in Czecho-Slovakia, he will soon learn that the ratification of the Communist list of cabinet members by Beneš was but the finishing touch to his signatures on two other documents: the Russian-Czech treaty of December 12, 1943, and Košice Program of April 5, 1945, by means of which Beneš and the other "democrats" marked out their post-war aims.

Just as in 1919, Beneš was again able to dupe the western foreign powers both during and after the second world war. They looked upon his state as the "lighthouse of democracy", which he himself praised as such, and were very much surprised when atop this lighthouse the red flag was hoisted. Had people but taken cognizance of Beneš's statements, the awakening would not have been quite so rough. For no matter how little Beneš's words from 1919 to 1938 dovetailed with the truth, there is one thing he cannot rightly be accused of. He and his associates never were ambiguous, in dealing with the West which granted them asylum, as to the direction in which they would steer the second Czech republic after an eventual German defeat. His allies, however, felt there was no reason to take serious interest in Beneš's written and spoken statements. They were only too glad to find in him a fellow who was far out in front with respect to hating anything German. His hatred, in fact, found only one satisfying outlet: the expulsion of 3½ millions Sudeten Germans from their ancestral homesteads. To execute this deed he needed the agreement of the allies, who simply followed the example of Josef Stalin.

The price for Stalin's consent was that "treaty on friendship, cooperation and mutual aid in the post-war period between the USSR and Č-SR" of December 12, 1943, in which the country was sold out to Russia. (Stalin was furthermore beholden to Beneš for having — as an unconscious tool of Heydrich — handed over to him Marshal

Tukachevski.) The late Hubert Ripka, a close associate of Beneš, later minister of trade in the second Czech Republic, still later an exile in London, tried at the time to disperse the fears of the less attentive: "I know that in certain circles within the West it is feared that we could become Russian vassals, but the name of Dr. Beneš is the best guarantee for the independence of the Č-SR" (Central European Observer, 1943, p. 304). And Beneš himself appealed as follows to his fellow-countrymen: "Don't let the Germans lead you astray when they speak to you of Bolshevik terror and dictatorship; the Soviet Union desires nothing more than to be our friend. Our State will be a democracy, naturally a people's democracy new style" (Central European Observer, 1945, p. 194.)

One can hardly say that Beneš kept his aims secret. He knew at all times how to adapt himself to the mentality of those on whom he was dependent. If he posed to the western statesmen at the peace conference of St. Germain in 1919 as a representative of a "middle-class government", which would be rejected by the "Marxist Sudeten Germans", he went overboard in the other direction in 1943 and 1945 in displaying even more Communist zeal than the Czech emigrés in Moscow. He states in his Memoirs (p. 126) that he feared he had not gone far enough in his talks with the Czech Communists in Moscow, until Fierlinger reassured him that the conference "had followed a most satisfying course and surpassed all expectations."

The result alluded to in the latter statement showed itself in 1945, when Beneš convoked the first Czech government in Košice. The Communists put up two deputy premiers and received the important ministries of interior, education, information and agriculture. A Communist secretary of state was paired with non-partisan foreign minister, Ján Masaryk.

In Košice a "program of the new Czecho-Slovak Government of the National Front of Czech and Slovaks" was proclaimed, which began with the country's Bolshevization. This declaration is replete with expressions of "undying gratitude for the glorious and heroic Red Army, admiration for the unrivalled Soviet art of war," while the west-

ern allies were mentioned in only one sentence. Partially out of gratitude to the "glorious Soviet Union," Beneš ceded the Carpatho-Ukraine — which had been a part of the first republic from 1919 to 1939 — to the Soviet Union, although he had always insisted on the pre-Munich boundaries, within which the Carpatho-Ukraine was situated. In the Košice Program reference is again made to the fact that the country's foreign policy is "determined for all time" by the Moscow treaty of 1943. At the same time it was announced that the republic would maintain "close fraternal relations" with all the Slavic countries (all of which were under Bolshevik control). Even Hungary, looked upon as an arch-enemy during the period of the first Czech republic, was now received into this circle of friendships, meantime having become Bolshevik-dominated!

Beneš had thus foreseen Prague's entrance into the Cominform. In order to pave the way intellectually for central Muscovite rule, Beneš appointed Communist Nejedlý as minister of education and Communist Kopecký as minister of information. He gave them — in the Košice Program — certain guidelines calling for a "revision of the relationship to German culture," which in plain language meant a clean break in a centuries old spiritual tie with the West. This also meant indoctrinating Czech and Slovak youth in the "creation, development, economy, and culture of the USSR" and the "disappearance from school books and youth education programs of anti-Soviet influences." Russian became the top priority foreign language in the schools; and replacing the humanistic education of former years was the requirement of "history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."

All this took place within the initial stages of Beneš's presidency, not under his successor Gottwald. The latter did not need to alter the set-up, because Beneš made thorough preparations. Beneš's minister of education declared: "Right now (1945) we must choose between East and West. I do not think there is any question as far as the Czech people are concerned. We belong to the great Slavic family of nations led by the mighty Russian nation with the great leader Stalin as its head" ("Unity" June, 2,

1945). Those who saw little to rejoice in at the Bolshevization of the country were lulled into submission by the strains of Pan-Slavism.

Hand in glove with a foreign-political adjustment to Russian plans and those of the satellites came a radical domestic political change. All elements of opposition were crushed. All parties not belonging to the "National Front" — and they were the strongest parties till 1939 — were forbidden, to say nothing of the dispossession and expulsion of the Sudeten Germans and Magyars. Beneš used the "people's courts" to get rid of his opponents, whom he threw into jail as "arch-traitors" and collaborators" or sent to the gallows. All regard for democratic or human rights was tossed to the four winds. "I am a real democrat," said Beneš. "I know that in the development of nations and States there are times when violent revolutions are necessary" (Memoirs, p. 285). This of course meant expelling of the Sudeten Germans (national revolution) which made rapid Bolshevization of the country much easier. From the wealth of these expelled a "Fund of National Revival" was created and placed under State control. It was not just a question of robbing the Sudeten German population. This act of spoliage was but the first blow at the existing economic order. Beneš's economic decrees of 1945 were to bear this out in crystal clarity. They called for certain factories to be dispossessed and nationalized in principle, and for all factories with more than 50 employees as well. By his decrees "on penal protection of national enterprises," "penal protection of the execution of the two-year economic plan," "measures for executing national mobilization of the labor force," the Communist economic system was introduced as early as 1945. Everything that smacked of compulsion, uncommonly stringent economic penal law, were not just the achievements of the February Revolution, but the work of Beneš and his team. The field of agriculture experienced like changes. The property stolen from the Germans was handed over to Communists who had served the government well. Care was taken to create so-called "midget" agricultural enterprises that were not long

self-supporting and of necessity led to forming of kholkhozes.

There was not much left for Gottwald to do. From Beneš he had inherited the Moscow political course, education based on a Bolshevik pattern, a "National Front" without opposition, liquidation of basic rights, and a Communist planned economy. All this continued according to plan. The parliamentary elections of 1946 brought the Communists 38% of the vote, and Beneš appointed Gottwald premier supported by eight other Communist ministers. The wheels were well oiled; the new machine functioned beautifully. The minister of information set about to prohibit all publications stemming from other-than-government parties, one of which had already been dissolved. When Czech-Slovakia began to ogle Marshall Plan funds, Moscow soon let it be known how the Russian-Czech treaty of 1943 was to be interpreted. Gottwald repeated Beneš's mouthings about Č-SR being a "people's democracy", pointed out that this was no longer an "old-fashioned bourgeois republic" but a socialist republic based on a system of nationalized economy. And no doubt — in 1947 — he was right. The Communist minister of the interior armed his police force and cleansed it of "unreliable" elements. The Communists forced the few non-Communist ministers to resign. Beneš for the second time put his name on a new list of ministers, headed by Klement Gottwald, and received still more Communists than had thus far been the case. A month later Masaryk the younger plunged from the third floor of the Czech foreign ministry in Czernin Palace. Beneš abdicated in June, 1948, for the second time within ten years and died shortly thereafter.

The so-called "February Putsch" is referred to as the "violent end of freedom-loving Czecho-Slovak democracy." But on February 25, 1948, little more occurred than the Communists threw some non-Communists out of the government. The Communists were no longer in need of the further support of their collaborators.

(Sudeten Bulletin)

ANDREW HLINKA AND PRAGUE

By CONSTANTINE ČULEN

After the Czecho-Slovak Republic was born, two significant Slovak personalities became "problems" for the governing group in Prague, the men handpicked by T. G. Masaryk and Eduard Beneš to run the infant state. The first was General Milan R. Štefánik. When the first World War was just about over, and T. G. Masaryk, at that time in Japan, had named the first Czecho-Slovak Government, Štefánik was named War Minister, while the department of Foreign Affairs was entrusted to Dr. Edward Beneš.

Štefánik expressed no desire for the office given him by Masaryk; he did not expect to be appointed War Minister, but Minister of Foreign Affairs of the new state, since he had opened the door for Masaryk to diplomatic circles which were most responsible for the creation of Czecho-Slovakia.

Beneš was a political unknown at that time, a politician without any practical political experience. As a result there was a conflict between Beneš and Štefánik. The latter, however, was far away from Prague and not very close to Masaryk, while Beneš, regarded as Masaryk's intimate and understudy, was right in Prague. Among the very first orders issued by Beneš in Prague to his subordinates and lieutenants was the order to inform Slovak factors "in a proper manner" about Štefánik. In the secret documents of Beneš's archive there were several accounts about reporting on Štefánik in such a "proper manner."

From the tone of the accounts, it is evident that the information given Slovak factors in regard to Štefánik was anything but favorable to him even before he decided to return home. The documents frequently mentioned the "Štefánik problem." And those who regarded Štefánik as the most important problem of the new republic gave out with a sigh of relief when Štefánik's plane was shot up and crashed, killing its occupants, as it neared Bratislava on that fateful day of May 4, 1919. The same men went to Bradlo, made a few nice speeches, and had a gigantic mound built over the dead Štefánik, "one of the

founders of the Czecho-Slovak Republic." But even this the Beneš Czechs would prefer to forget today. Thereafter, the "Štefánik problem" ceased to be a problem!

The second Slovak personality that entered the life of the Czecho-Slovak Republic as a "problem" was Andrew Hlinka. In a way, Hlinka was given the same treatment as Štefánik. Before he had come to Prague, the same people in the service of Beneš made it their business to inform the Czechs about the "Andrew Hlinka problem."

In the life of Andrew Hlinka, between the end of October, 1918, and the end of January, 1919, there is a colossal abyss. In 1918, Hlinka was the only one in Slovakia who spoke out clearly and forcefully for secession from the Magyars and for union with the Czechs to form a common political state on the basis of "equals with equals." At the meeting in Martin, in May 1918, he prevented the flight of Slovak leaders from politics, shouting down Dula who wanted to resign the chairmanship of the group. At that time Hlinka said: "Let us not circumvent the issue, but let us say outright that we are for a Czech—Slovak orientation!"

In 1918, at two secret meetings and one public meeting, when uncertainty and fear dominated all present, Andrew Hlinka stood up fearlessly and proclaimed: "Our marriage with the Magyars was not successful, we must part." But he went further and said what should be done: "Let us unite with the Czechs in one state."

Official Prague had the opportunity to make Hlinka the greatest friend of the Czechs. All it had to do was tell the truth about Hlinka, what Hlinka had done to gain the Slovaks for the new republic. If it had done that, Hlinka would have been greeted in Prague with demonstrations which would have undoubtedly surpassed those in his honor in 1907 after the Černová massacre. But official Prague had willed it otherwise. Masaryk and Beneš — and their political servants — were well aware of the fact that Hlinka was a Catholic priest, the leader of the Slovak Catholic People's Party, and a great Slovak patriot and champion of freedom and independence of the Slovak people. A small group of Slovak politicians, handpicked by Masa-

ryk and Beneš to serve in Prague, saw to it that the "proper" information about Hlinka was propagated. Official Prague could then quote and spread it. It was obvious that the Masaryk-Beneš political clique did not want Andrew Hlinka for a friend, so they did what they could to embarrass him and present him in a false light to the people of Czecho-Slovakia to ruin him politically and otherwise.

When the Czecho-Slovak State was established, the Slovaks, including Hlinka, had no clear conception of what the new state would be like. That the new state would be run in the spirit of equality of both nations — on that, it seems, all were agreed. The Slovaks would run their country, while the Czechs would be masters of their own household; if the Slovaks needed help, the Czechs would help, but the quantity and quality of such help would be decided by the Slovaks, not the Czechs. The Czechs agreed with this in principle.

After Czecho-Slovakia became a reality, some of the men who were afraid to open their mouths before October, 1918, suddenly acquired sufficient courage to run to Prague and tell what they had done for the creation of the state in order to secure political offices for themselves. Hlinka was not one of them. And thereby Hlinka became "dangerous" to the Prague clique of Masaryk and Beneš.

When Hlinka arrived in Prague as the last of the Slovak deputies, no one told him: "Hlinka, you behaved valiantly, thank you!" No, the Prague politicians, influenced by Masaryk and Beneš, could not do that. When Hlinka arrived in Prague he was welcomed not as the greatest friend of the Czechs, but as the worst enemy of the new State. Long debates in parliament revolved around the personality of Andrew Hlinka. Appraising this behavior of the Beneš Czechs years later, we can say that it was the first Czech defeat. The history of the advent of Hlinka to Prague and the history of the beginnings of the struggle, which is not finished to date, is very interesting.

Andrew Hlinka did not run to Prague as soon as Czecho-Slovakia became a reality, because he realized that Slovakia needed to be consolidated first. Hlinka did not yearn for a ministerial or cabinet position as some Slovak

politicians did, making it appear as if this were the last station of happiness, or the main prize in the lottery of their life's career. Hlinka came to Prague on January 10, 1919. Hlinka had not been in Prague for a long time — the last time when he lectured in Prague, the city of Prague welcomed him as it had never welcomed any Slovak before or since. It was a welcome fit for a king. But all that seemed to be forgotten now.

The majority of Slovak deputies, selected and named by Šrobár and approved by Masaryk and Beneš, had already taken the oath at previous sessions. The 15th session began with the announcement by chairman Tomášek that Andrew Hlinka, a member of the National Assembly, had presented himself and was ready to take the oath of office. Anton Štefánek read the form of the oath and Hlinka replied: "I do so promise!" At that instant the parliament responded with applause. This was the first and, at the same time, the last spontaneous applause that Hlinka received in the Prague parliament from the Czechs and the Czech Slovaks ("Czechoslovaks").

After taking the oath, Hlinka immediately returned home. In less than two weeks, while he was absent, Hlinka became the target of the most vicious and malicious attacks from members of the same parliament. It is strange, when we think of it now, that the attacks were initiated by the otherwise keen Czech Social Democrat, Mr. Rudolph Bechyně, who said on January 21, 1919:

"I have here the organ of the Czecho-Slovak People's Party, the **CZECH**. In it is a report of a non-political meeting of Czecho-Slovak Catholics. I read here that the delegate from Slovakia, Andrew Hlinka, spoke at that meeting and this is what he said about the Czechs: '**They are ousting us from our churches!**' Allow me to mark this by its right name: it is not dignified for a Catholic priest to lie."

"Excellent," exclaimed the parliament, wildly applauding Bechyně.

Bechyně: "Hlinka further stated that a hundred Czech teachers are going to Slovakia and what such a teacher knows, that we know."

Čupřík: "We got to know that from Moravia!"

Bechyně: "Gentlemen, in such a manner, according to Hlinka's opinion, will be welcomed in Slovakia the Czech teachers, who are going there with real idealism, the kind of idealism we recommend to many of those for whom Hlinka speaks! Furthermore, it says that they are taking religion away from 90 percent of the Catholics. But where is the proof for this? Who is taking religion away from whom? Gentlemen, if anyone took religion away from the people in this war, then it was the army chaplains, about whose activities all soldiers, the faithful and unfaithful believers, are properly informed."

As Bechyně continued to speak, he mentioned also that the separation of Church from State is just about ready and closed with this warning:

"It is my wish that our public should not be prepared for this act in the manner that it was brought to us in royal Prague by Andrew Hlinka, about whose head the aureola is very false."

Hlinka did have the martyr's aureola: a three-year prison term. And this was something that no other Slovak had. Bechyně's attack was the beginning of a bitter struggle — a struggle which in the end meant the collapse of Czecho-Slovakia, the end of Slovak-Czech collaboration for any sort of common political state.

The signal for the attack on Hlinka was given. Even members of the Slovak Club of the Prague parliament caught on quickly; they sensed it would be to their advantage to attack Hlinka in Prague. To ingratiate themselves to the "progressive" Masaryk-Beneš Czechs, they willingly and gladly did what they wanted them to do: smear Hlinka. They readily forgot that there were a thousand and one problems in Slovakia. These did not interest them primarily; the big problem was Hlinka.

On January 23, 1919, the Prague parliament was the scene of the wildest conversations. The first attack against Hlinka was made by Deputy Devečka, who said: "Mr. Hlinka was and is a puzzle for the Slovaks!"

The "progressive" Czechs liked that remark, rewarding Devečka's "wisdom" with wild applause, as if he had

just set another column for the foundations of the newly-born republic. What Hlinka happened to be in 1919, and what the Slovaks thought of him, is not difficult to ascertain at all, but who was Devečka, who was the first Slovak in the Prague parliament to draw a sword against Hlinka?

Public sources, literary handbooks, and encyclopediae have nothing to give about Devečka. But it is said by those who are informed that Devečka was a Lutheran preacher, one of the pre-war collaborators of the periodical "**Průdy**." In short, from time to time, Devečka contributed several lines to a periodical which had some 238 subscribers just before the war began. This was the man, then, who spoke in the name of the Slovak Club of Deputies, of which Hlinka, too, was a member, saying that he and the Club do not identify themselves with Hlinka! Of course, this pleased the Masaryk-Beneš politicians exceedingly.

Šrobár, in his book "**Oslobodené Slovensko**" (Liberated Slovakia), recalls that there was much distrust of Slovak leaders in Prague for their separatistic stand. Devečka lost no time in assuring Prague that they were good and reliable Slovaks, with the exception of Hlinka, who was, in his estimation, no good.

Devečka's speech was complemented by the "**Slovenský denník**" (Slovak Daily) with this remark: "Hlinka fears that he will lose power; he does not want Czech enlightenment to shine into the dark corners of the pulpits and that is why he is instigating against progressive teachers."

The Czechs use the term "**devečka**" for a maid. In politics that is exactly what Devečka was: an obedient servant-maid of the Czech socialistic clique, which was determined to neutralize the political activity of Slovak Catholic leaders. During one of his last speeches, on March 5, 1937, Devečka again rehashed the question why Slovak Lutherans had to be employed to help the Czechs in the administration of government in Slovakia. After nineteen years of Czecho-Slovakia, qualified Slovaks of the Catholic faith still found it difficult to find government employment, because, according to Devečka, it would not be pro-

per now to replace the non-Catholics in Slovakia after they had performed so faithfully for Czecho-Slovakia. Devečka did not speak the truth. No one in Slovakia said that Slovak Lutherans should be thrown out of offices, but the majority of Slovaks were agreed that Slovak Catholics, too, should be placed in government jobs. Furthermore, few people said throw ALL the Czechs out of Slovakia, but many did speak out against sending more Czechs into Slovakia after the Slovaks did have qualified sons and daughters to fill the various positions which required education and training. Devečka, however, was in the service of the Czech regime in Prague and had to do its bidding for his own sake.

Hlinka practically stood alone in the defense of the interests of his Slovak people in 1919. Outside of Juriga, no others were experienced politicians. He was not defended by his own people so much as by Czech Catholics under the leadership of Msgr. Šrámek. They backed Hlinka not so much out of love for him, but rather for the practical political considerations which could be exacted with the aid of Hlinka's support. Šrámek in fact could more easily and effectively defend Hlinka's clean shield than his own. Later on, of course, we know that Šrámek turned against Hlinka and his party, but in 1919 he was Hlinka's "lone defender" so to speak. After Devečka's senseless attack against the absent Hlinka on January 23, 1919, Šrámek asked for the floor to reply to Devečka's smear-statements. He had just begun to speak, addressing the members of parliament "most esteemed gentlemen," when a voice boomed out: "And what about ladies?" Šrámek answered coolly: "I'm sorry, but I see none here." Thereupon Deputy Zemina (Zeminová) jumped up and shouted: "I am an enemy; I am no lady!" She was right and so was Šrámek: Madame Zemina was no lady!

Šrámek then spoke how necessary it was to cultivate and preserve national unity, particularly at this time (1919) when the borders of the State were not yet defined. Even to this day it is difficult to explain why Šrámek's words evoked such a storm of protest and opposition. He had attacked no one and had spoken clearly and without malice

on what he thought was one of the major problems of the new State. In those days, however, it made little difference what Hlinka or Šrámek said about anything: all they had to do was ask for the floor and the Czech "progressives" would start barking. I quote from the record for the edification of our readers so they might get an idea of what the "progressive" Deputies in the Prague Parliament were like in the first years of the Republic.

Buřival: That means that you must quit inciting against us in the churches!

Aust: But it will happen one time that we shall reply to you in the churches. The lights in the heavens are already extinguished!

When Šrámek asked for a sense of justice and questioned whether the representation in parliament justly represented the people who sent their deputies, Deputy Aust barked: That is FATA MORGANA!

Kubíček: Only according to the merits one has gained in the nation. Here every party is represented according to merits which it gained in the nation.

"Gentlemen," asked Šrámek, "do you really want me to cause a riot in this parliament?"

Thereupon the entire parliament resounded with bitter invectives and outcries. When the clamor died down, various members asked and were given the privilege of the floor:

Zemina: Well, go ahead and riot!

Stránsky: Just don't jingle your spurs!

Johanis: You're capable of it, Mr. Professor. You used to send people drunk with alcohol against us.

Zemina: In Vienna you had no courage.

Buřival: In Vienna you made the politics of sneaks.

Zemina: Hlinka is inciting against the teachers.

Čuřík: (one of Šrámek's men): Hlinka incites no one; he is a martyr. If Hlinka did not exist, you would have no Slovakia!

Markovič: Hlinka did not make Slovakia; he betrayed her. This man is one day a priest and something else the next. I am a Slovak! (Applause).

"Allow me," Šrámek tried again, "since the day be-

fore yesterday the absent Hlinka was attacked in such a manner..." — but a booming voice bellowed: This is ingratitude! And then...

Zemina: He attacked Czech teachers.

Čuřík: Without Hlinka there would have been no Slovakia. To Hlinka belongs the credit that the Slovaks joined the Czechs. He was jailed for two years for the Slovak cause.

Thereupon shouts of ridicule broke out, and a voice cried out: Tell us more, what else did Hlinka do?

Markovič: If there were no Masaryk, there would be no Slovaks.

Šrámek: Permit me, esteemed gentlemen, to state that I felt embarrassed when a member of the presidium of the Czecho-Slovak Social Democratic Party, in such a crude manner, if I must say it, attacked the honor of an absent member of this parliament without ascertaining beforehand exactly what this man had said not in parliament, but at a meeting.

Voices: But we read about it in the "Czech."

"Esteemed gentlemen, continued Šrámek, I recall for you what you already know very well, that we are here concerned with every word, every qualifying word, when such a great reproach is made against Andrew Hlinka with falsehoods."

Jaroš: He does not deserve anything else when he spits at Czech teachers!

Zemina: He used to kiss the hand of a Magyar bishop!

Šrámek: Allow me to state further that there is no proof for what has been said here against Hlinka and no one of us knows exactly what Hlinka said.

Jaroš: Then he should have retracted it in the newspapers.

Šrámek: But he is in Slovakia and does not know what is going on here.

Stránsky: Well, even one Slovak deputy condemned him.

Čuřík: From what party?

Voice: He, too, was a clerical.

Šrámek at that time, however, stood his ground, de-

fending Hlinka against all "progressive" Czechs who wanted to discredit him. Hlinka had a great following in Slovakia, Šrámek told the parliament, and by ridiculing and smearing him Hlinka's opponents were not rendering a noble service to the Slovaks and the Czechs and certainly not to the newly-born Czecho-Slovak Republic. When Deputy Bechyně claimed that he heard Hlinka speak against Masaryk in Proštevov and in Brno, Šrámek asked him when that happened. When Bechyně replied that it happened before the war, Deputy Sedláček asked Bechyně what he himself happened to be before the war and what he had said about certain people and matters at that time. Bechyně, of course, would rather not talk about that!

Šrámek admired Hlinka for standing up for the rights of his people and for his fight in the defense of the individuality of the Slovak people. Promises had been made the Slovaks before they decided to join the Czechs to form a joint political State and those promises should be kept. And Hlinka had the right to demand that they be kept. Hlinka was and is, Šrámek said, for the Czecho-Slovak Republic, but he also is the Slovak nation's symbol of freedom and independence; he should be heard and everything should be done to make the Slovaks feel at home in the new Republic. But Šrámek was yelled down by the Czech "progressive" anti-clericals who were egged on by Masaryk's "away from Rome — Rome must be put on trial and condemned!"

The Czech press of that time enthusiastically indulged in attacks against Andrew Hlinka. The "Lidové noviny" (People's News) said in an editorial that the regeneration of Slovakia is possible only on the foundation of modern Czech currents. "It will take only a few years and things will be the same in Slovakia as they are in the Czech lands," concluded the editorial (Feb. 27, 1919).

Stenographic reports of the minutes of the Prague parliament from the beginning of 1919 make particularly interesting reading. They describe some very lively scenes, during which a speaker had to wait quite some time before he could resume speaking. Every mention of Hlinka's name, it seems, caused disturbances, insulting outcries, and

bitter attacks. With the exception of the temperamental Bechyně, none of the foremost Czech politicians of the old Vienna school indulged in frivolous, senseless, and unsparing attacks against Hlinka.

It is interesting that Markovič was of the opinion that without Masaryk there would have been no Slovak nation, because it was Masaryk himself who had said that the Slovak nation is the invention of Magyar propaganda and that there was no Slovak nation!

Imagine if you will, how much poorer the world would be without T. G. Masaryk: it would have to do without the Slovak nation and without "Czechoslovak" democracy! Masaryk represented the smallest Czech political party, but the world, including the Slovaks and Czechs who knew better, was supposed to believe that "Masaryk's teaching became the national Credo of Czecho-Slovakia." Masaryk, the great "progressive," was put in the saddle by the Allies and his disciples lost no time in building altars in his honor to replace those of the "outmoded, reactionary" saints.

Two months after that "glorious October Day" (Oct. 28, 1918) — after Hlinka had come out resolutely against the Magyars and for joining the Czechs — the "progressive" Czechs of Masaryk and Beneš proclaimed Hlinka a Magyarone, a coward who had surrendered to the Magyars. Scotus Viator replied at that time: "Hlinka never did submit to the Magyars. He lies who would make a Magyarone of him and makes himself stupid."

Hlinka and his people wanted to serve the best interests of their new Republic; they proved this over and over again. But the Masaryk-Beneš Czechs, and the Czech Slovaks ("Czechoslovaks") in their service, welcomed Hlinka in Prague as an enemy of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. The consequences of this folly were far-reaching.

On January 30, 1919, Hlinka returned to Prague and read the records of the parliamentary sessions to learn what was said about him in his absence. When Hlinka did rise in his own defense, it is interesting to note that the Czech voices, so loud and disturbing when Šrámek spoke, were now silent. Since the accusations and allegations made

against him were of a very serious nature, Hlinka openly demanded an investigation of each and every charge and all accusers. But the Czechs clammed up on that occasion. Markovič, descendant of one of Hlinka's very good friends, stood alone against Hlinka.

Hlinka stressed the fact that no one can honestly accuse him of hating the Czechs or of working against the welfare and security of the Czecho-Slovak Republic. He and his followers recognize and respect the right of the Czech people to certain inalienable rights, but by the same token, the Slovaks expect the Czechs and their leaders to recognize and respect the right of the Slovak people to the same inalienable rights. After what had happened in the Prague Parliament, Hlinka quit visiting the Slovak Club of which he was a member, but he did visit the Deputy's Club of Šrámek's Czech People's Party. Hlinka later said: "That I appreciate good Czechs is proven by the fact that in Prague I do not visit the Slovak Club, but the Club of the Czech Peoples' Party."

• • •

WHO SAID IT?

"We are deeply convinced that this alliance (with the USSR) is to the benefit of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union and that it also is a contribution to international understanding. Whosoever among us does not want to acknowledge this supra-partisan and national character of the Czechoslovak-Soviet alliance, he is undermining this alliance and working against his very own aims." — (Dr. Peter Zenkl, chairman "Council of Free Czechoslovakia," Karlové Vary, July 20, 1947, according to ČAS, 7-25-47).

• • •

"In Czech politics, in Czech national life, it is urgent that we come to an understanding with the Communist Party . . . the Communist party shall remain the greatest force in our political scheme even after the elections are over, and socialism shall remain the foundation of our national life. . . . Coming to terms with the Communists is the golden theme of our political philosophy." — (Ferdinand Peroutka, a Beneš Czech, DNEŠEK, 2-9-48).

The History of Slovakia:

P. A. HROBAK

GERMAN COLONIZATION IN SLOVAKIA

In Hungary there were not enough people to settle all the land. The country was sparsely populated especially in the wooded hills along the frontier. For that reason from the beginning of the eleventh century the Germans began to migrate into Hungary. As foreign guests they settled at first beneath the larger castles where they established market settlements. Hungarian rulers, who made family ties with the ruling class in Germany, encouraged the immigration of the Germans. The influx of Germans was also aided by the monasteries which invited foreign settlers to their extensive but unoccupied lands. Individual nobles also followed the example of their King and helped the Germans establish new settlements where the population was small. Because the territory of mountainous Slovakia was only sparsely settled, the Germans moved into these areas in large numbers.

Already during the reign of Géza II (1141—1161) Germans had come to Spiš where they founded many villages and towns. The successors of Géza II, especially Andrew II (1205—1235 A.D.), invited Germans into the country and granted them many privileges to establish new settlements in the hilly regions. The national picture of the Slovak country changed even before the Turkish invasion, because numerous German settlements were added to the original Slovak population. This flood of German colonists increased especially after the Tartar invasion, when Béla IV and his successors desired to rebuild devastated and depopulated areas. This strong influx of German settlers continued throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and created a great transformation in the national, economic and cultural conditions of Slovakia.

The dense mountainous region of central Slovakia, the primitive Zvolen forest, was a veritable hunter's paradise, and up to the 13th century the kings of Hungary used it exclusively as such. This vast uninhabited region, except

for small scattered settlements of forest wardens, dog-trainers, falconers and fishermen, brought the King only a very small revenue. And because the population of the fertile plains of southern Slovakia was not large enough to settle this vast region along the upper Hron river, the Germans, settled in Krupiná since the twelfth century, literally poured into the region. In like manner the Germans settled along the borders of the Nitra and Turiec counties, in the Spiš forest and also in Liptov. The privileges which the Hungarian kings granted immigrants lured the Germans to Slovakia. The first of these German colonists came to Slovakia from northern Germany, where poor soil, often inundated by the sea, produced but sparsely. Later they came to Slovakia from other parts of Germany.

Slovakia's mountainous regions concealed an abundance of precious minerals, including gold and silver ore. The native population, employed in tilling the soil and in animal husbandry, did not know how to exploit this natural wealth, even though the first mining settlements originated in Slovakia in the eleventh century. Names of towns like Rudno, Rudník, Rudná (**ruda**=ore), Zlatno, Zlatník, Zlatovce (**zlato**=gold), prove that the first miners in Slovakia were Slovaks. To exploit this wealth of various ore deposits efficiently, the owners of the lands—the King, nobility, and the monks—called in the Germans who had greater experience in mining and could assure large returns to the landowners.

German colonists, who migrated in great numbers to Slovakia were no longer only guests, but became hereditary holders of properties which the authorities granted them. Every group of colonists was brought in by the King's representative who was called a locator (**lokátor**). He took over the lands marked out by the authorities for the colonists, surveyed and assigned parcels of land to individual families, organized a settlement, and became its administrator (**rychtár**). Of course, such a settlement did not bring any return to the authorities the first year, because the settlers first had to clear the forests, condition the soil and lay out the fields. So that a new settlement might become sound economically, the authorities usually granted a period

of relief (**lehota**) upon the expiration of which the settlers began paying taxes to the owner. This relief period usually lasted eighteen years. To this day there are forty-six villages in Slovakia bearing the name "Lehota": Mníchova Lehota, Jánova Lehota, Bartošova Lehota, Kráľova Lehota, Petrova Lehota, Paučina Lehota, Bzovská Lehota, Horná Lehota, Dolná Lehota, etc.

The "rychtár" (administrátor) was the head of every such settlement; he took the largest tract of land and paid no taxes. He was the judge and jury in all litigations and collected the fines, of which he was entitled to keep one-third. The authority put him in charge of the village tavern, let him run a mill, a workshop and granted him many other rights and privileges. The office of "rychtár" was usually hereditary.

After the expiration of the relief period, the colonists began to pay the prescribed tribute. At first it was one-tenth of the harvest, which the taxpayer had to bring into the court of his respective lord. Moreover, the colonist had to supply his lord with poultry, eggs, cheese and other items. Later, when the peasant could sell his produce, he paid all his taxes in money. Because this revenue was determined once and for all time, the position of these settlers was not intolerable, for they could increase their annual income by industrious labor, while the tribute remained unchanged. Taxes were usually paid twice annually: in the spring on St. George's day (April 24), and in the fall on the feast-day of St. Havel (October 16). Since the ruler, noble, or abbey, derived rich revenues from new settlements, many villages were promoted in those times.

All new communities founded by the Germans were ruled by the laws which the colonists brought from their own country. In Slovakia the Saxon Law of the city of Magdenburg prevailed. Among the new settlements, organized according to German law, the cities attained greatest significance.

THE BEGINNINGS OF SLOVAK CITIES

Agricultural towns and villages were for the most part in Slovakia up to the thirteenth century, because the Slovaks occupied themselves in the main with agriculture.

In the more densely forested areas, where there was little arable soil, there were settlements of people who concerned themselves with animal husbandry, and farming was taken up only after the forests were cleared and burnt away. Tradesmen, in the employ of the king's court and the royal castles, resided in some of the villages already in this period. Beneath the significant county-seat castles market settlements were established, but usually by foreign merchants. Along the frontier regions of Slovakia, near the strategic gates, and near the important trade highways, settlements of foreign warriors, assigned to sentinel duty, were founded. And in central Slovakia at that time there already were several mining settlements. But up to the eleventh century there were no cities in Slovakia. Slovak cities did not arise until the Germans immigrated to Slovakia in large numbers.

Slovak cities came into being in the 13th and 14th centuries. But not all of them sprang up in the same manner. Some developed gradually from ancient villages as, for example, Trnava, Žilina, Turčiansky Svätý Martin, Prievidza, Topoľčany. Others, like Bratislava, Nitra, Hlohovec, Zvolen and Trenčín, developed from market settlements beneath the castles. Many cities in Slovakia developed near the important commercial highways and became centers of economic life. Hlohovec had such an origin for it is along the road which joins the Váh region with the Nitra area; Topoľčany and Prievidza developed along the highway which connected Nitra to Turiec; Žilina originated at the crossroads leading to Silesia, Moravia and Poland. Ružomberok and Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš sprouted up in the upper Váh region. In the Spiš district the commercial cities of Kežmarok and Levoča attained great significance. Košice, the largest city in the east, developed along the road which connected Budín with Cracow; along this same road arose Prešov, Sabinov and Bardejov in the Šariš district. Great economic importance was attained by towns which had their origin in the mining settlements of the Zvolen Forest area (Banská Štiavnica, Banská Bystrica, Kremnica, Krupina, Slovenská Lupča, Ľubietová, Pukanec, Brezno), those of Liptov (Nemecká Lupča) and Spiš (Gelnica, Spišská Nová Ves).

The difference between the city and the village was especially in the various privileges granted to cities by the ruler, which guaranteed the city not only independence from the county administration (župan), but also enabled its economic development.

Every city had the right to have weekly and annual market days. On such days the people of the entire vicinity assembled to sell their agricultural products and buy manufactured goods and merchandise from the city tradesmen and merchants. The "mile law" had a deep significance, for it denied a merchant the right to set up his business within a mile of the city lest he jeopardize the interests of the urban tradesmen. These cities near the frontier or important commercial highways were granted the right of "storage" (maintaining warehouses), which gave them the assurance that merchants who brought merchandise from neighboring countries could not pass up the city and had to store their goods there. Bratislava had such a right of storage for goods from Austria; Trnava on goods from Bohemia and Morava; Bardejov and Podolíneč on goods from Poland; Sučany on Polish salt; Košice on merchandise from Poland and Russia and on wine to be exported to Poland. Furthermore, cities were granted the privilege of brewing beer.

Merchants of many cities displayed and sold their merchandise over a wide area without paying taxes or customs duty. To prevent brigands and robbers from menacing the security of a city and its vicinity, the cities were granted the "right of the sword" by which they could condemn criminals to death and execute them. The cities also safeguarded their security further by being allowed to build strong walls; it was thus that many cities became real fortresses, places of refuge in times of peril.

The most important privilege enjoyed by the cities, however, was their independence of the regional authority, whereby they could govern themselves according to the legal code brought to Slovakia from Germany. According to this law, a city elected its own council, which usually consisted of twelve councilmen or advisors. Every councilman had to serve as "rychtár" (administrator or mayor) for a period

of one month. The city inhabitants also could elect their own parish priest. Such cities, not under the jurisdiction of a "župan" and subject directly to the king, were called "royal free cities." Each had its own coat of arms and seal.

BRATISLAVA is mentioned as the Breslauspurch castle already in 907 A.D. A market settlement, mentioned in 1151, sprang up beneath the castle. In 1290 a city was established near this settlement; later it fused with the older market settlement. Bratislava was granted many privileges in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

TRNAVA developed from an old Slovak village which was situated on the bank of the Trnava Creek and on the highway which connected Praha with Budín. Trnava was granted city privileges in 1238 and, hence, is the oldest city in Slovakia.

SKALICA became a city in 1372.

NITRA was the most significant Slovak castle already in the ninth century. A market settlement was established, which was granted city rights in 1248 A. D. as a reward for valiantly defending the castle during the Turkish invasion. Later, the original "Staré Mesto" (Old Town) was fused with several villages (like Párovce) and thus originated the city of Nitra of today.

HLOHOVEC belongs among the most ancient castles in Slovakia. It guarded the road from the Váh region to Nitra. A settlement sprang up under its walls and next to it, in the 14th century, the city of Frieštadt. When these two settlements united, the present city of Hlohovec came into being.

TRENČÍN was mentioned as Laugaricio already in the second century. The Trenčín castle was there in the 11th century and protected the Váh region road which was connected to the Vlár highway. Beneath its walls was a settlement, which became a city about the year 1300, after the advent of German colonists. In 1402 Trenčín was granted the right of "storage."

ŽILINA was originally a Slovak village which grew rapidly, because of its advantageous location at the point where the Kysuca flows into the Váh and at the intersection of commercial highways. It was mentioned for the first

time in 1208. It became a city about 1350 and probably one of the most significant cities of Slovakia. The people of Žilina founded several nearby settlements, among them also Kysucké Nové Mesto.

TOPOĽČANY became a city some time at the beginning of the second half of the thirteenth century and attained significance largely because it was situated on the road going from Nitra to Turiec and near the road that came from the Váh region.

PRIEVIDZA, as a settlement, was mentioned for the first time in 1113. It attained municipal status in 1388, when it gained its independence from Bojnice castle. Prievidza was granted city rights by the city of Krupina.

TURČIANSKY SVÄTÝ MARTIN developed near the old settlement of Modla, the very name of which shows that it was founded in the Great Moravian period. As a village it was mentioned in 1284 and was granted city rights in 1340 by the city of Krupina.

RUŽOMBEROK was founded by German colonists, who searched for precious metals in Liptov. It became a city in 1318, when it was granted the same rights as those enjoyed by Nemecká Lupča since 1263.

KEŽMAROK, as its name indicates, is also of German origin. It was a village which was granted some rights in 1269. In 1380 it became a city.

LEVOČA, first mentioned in 1263, was granted city rights at the opening of the fourteenth century and shortly thereafter became the leading city of the entire Spiš region.

PREŠOV, granted city rights in 1324, became the center of economic life of the entire Šariš region.

SABINOV grew up from a village which had its origin in the twelfth century. It became a city about the middle of the fourteenth century.

BARDEJOV was founded by the Cistercian monks who settled in the territory at the beginning of the thirteenth century. It was granted city rights in 1320 and became a free royal city in 1376.

PODOLÍNEC belongs among the frontier towns. The Poles founded it in 1244, because at that time this part of

Spiš belonged to Poland. Wenceslaus II, King of Bohemia and Poland, elevated it to a city in 1292, but a few years later it reverted to Slovakia.

KRUPINA is one of the oldest Slovak cities. It became a city the same time as Trnava (1238). The Krupina Right (law) was extended over the whole of Slovakia.

ZVOLEN was mentioned, in 1214, as a village beneath the walls of the castle bearing that name. It was granted some rights in 1244 and became a city gradually. Its inhabitants founded other settlements, especially in the upper Hron region.

KOŠICE was originally a village at the foot of the Hradová Castle and received its city charter the same year that Bratislava was incorporated. Since the main highway from Hungary to Poland passed this way, a city sprang up near the old village which was granted city rights the same time as Bratislava (1290). Košice prospered not only from trade, but also from the new privileges granted to it by the Hungarian kings in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Of course, not all Slovak cities enjoyed equal rights. The kings favored some cities more than others. Some cities were granted all rights outright, while others received them only gradually. This charter or document of rights had to be confirmed by successive rulers, who had the authority to enhance the rights granted by their predecessors.

Some cities, because of their advantageous location, used their privileges to prosper economically, while others, lacking the conditions for development, made no progress economically and declined in time.

Mining cities, in regions rich in precious metals, were specially favored and enjoyed a special status. These cities were granted the right to seek out and exploit the rich metal deposits in their vicinity. Slovaks were engaged in mining already in the eleventh century, but the Germans introduced a highly efficient method of mining. The oldest mining town in Slovakia, Banská Štiavnica, was granted city rights in 1250; it was administered by the law of the Czech mining city of Jihlava. Through Banská Štiavnica

the rest of the Slovak mining towns received their charters, except Kremnica, which was governed by the Kutnohorie form of charter. The mines of Banská Štiavnica were very profitable; about half of the silver mined in Hungary in the thirteenth century came from its mines. Kremnica, however, soon became the richest mining center. The famous Kremnica ducats, valid in the whole of central Europe, were coined here since 1335. In 1255 Banská Bystrica became a city. The inhabitants of all these cities were quite prosperous, they could afford to build large and imposing homes and churches. Besides these large mining centers, there were smaller ones like Pukanec (1337), Banská Belá (1440), Nová Baňa (1345), Ľubietová (1379), Brezno (1380), Gelnica (about 1250) and Spišská Nová Ves (1380).

Nowhere in the Hungarian kingdom did so many cities arise as in Slovakia.

SLOVAK CITIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES

So that cities could conform with their purpose, they had to be built properly. Every city was, therefore, built according to a plan which fitted the terrain. Where a city developed from an older settlement, the latter became the foundation for building the city. Where a city arose as an entirely new settlement, it could be built precisely according to a predetermined plan. On level ground with sufficient free area, the ground plan of the city was regular. But many cities sprang up in hilly areas, where there was insufficient level ground and, hence, had to be built on a slope (Banská Štiavnica), in a basin (Banská Bystrica and Kremnica), or on a bank of a river (Nitra and Trenčín). The structural development of a city depended on natural conditions.

The public square (*námestie*) was the most important part of a city; it was usually centrally located. Through it passed the main highway that connected the city with the vicinity. The square had to be quite spacious, because it was there that the weekly and annual markets (*trh* or *jar-mok*) were held. The homes of the wealthiest citizens encircled the square. They were narrow, usually two-story dwellings with high gables and steep roofs. The workshops

of the tradesmen were in the long, narrow courtyards of these homes. On the ground-floor of these stone structures there often were vaulted arcades under which merchants laid out their wares during inclement weather. Such homes still stand in Žilina and Kysucké Nové Mesto. The majority of the other homes were of wood. Architecturally, the city hall and the churches were the most imposing buildings.

Streets ran in all directions in a parallel or vertical fashion. They were quite narrow, unpaved, and unlighted at night. Some streets were made blind so that in case of invasion by the enemy, he could be chased into them and captured or destroyed.

On the most prominent site of a city stood the parish church, the pride and ornament of every city. It was built either on the square (Skalica, Podolíneč, Spišská Nová Ves, Prešov, Sabinov, Košice, etc.), or near the city ramparts (Trnava, Krupina and Žilina). The parish church often formed a part of the city fortifications (Banská Bystrica and Kremnica). The parish cemetery was near the church. Large imposing churches were built in Slovak cities by the Franciscans and Dominicans (Trnava, Nitra, Skalica, Hlohovec, Banská Štiavnica and Košice). The most significant building of each city was its City Hall (**mestský dom**) which was situated either directly on the square (Levoča, Spišská Nová Ves, Bardejov), or very near it (Košice, Bratislava).

The larger and more prosperous Slovak cities were granted the right of enclosure. At first the cities were enclosed with wooden palisades, but later with solid stone walls. Because the construction of stone walls was very expensive, the city was exempt from paying various taxes while the walls were being constructed. In some cities, which were protected by nature itself, only the castle stood high above the city (Banská Štiavnica, Banská Bystrica), or individual bastions stood near the highways which guarded the entrance to the city. The wealthiest cities, fearing invasion by an enemy, were enclosed by a solid stone wall with numerous citadels. Gates led through the ramparts into the city; usually two if only one road ran through the city, and four gates if there were two roads running through it; and there usually were several lesser gates. The main gates

were part of a mighty bastion in which there was a permanent guard. All gates were closed and locked at night. A wide and deep moat surrounded the walls to prevent the enemy from getting directly beneath them. Above the moat was a drawbridge. In front of the main gate some cities built lesser fortifications to protect the entrance to the city (Bardejov). Some Slovak cities built their ramparts immediately after their founding. Trnava, located on an open plain had fortifications with many bastions, four main and two secondary gates; these ramparts, except the main gates, are still standing today. Bratislava fortified itself in 1311; Michael's Gate and the names of other gates have been preserved. Prešov built its ramparts in 1378, Žilina in 1405, and Skalica in 1372. Some Slovak cities erected their fortifications later, when the Turks threatened Slovakia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Zvolen, Krupina). Smaller, but more securely situated cities never had any fortifications around them (Turčiansky Svätý Martin, Liptovský Svätý Mikuláš).

Naturally, cities built in such a fashion could not be very extensive and have a very numerous population. Trnava was the largest city in Slovakia; it grew up in the center of a fertile valley in western Slovakia, on the crossroads of important highways. In the Spiš region, Levoča was the leading city. In central Slovakia, Kremnica grew unusually fast; in 1442 it already had about three thousand inhabitants. Later Bratislava and Košice outgrew these cities. Other Slovak towns had from 800 to 1000 inhabitants.

The overwhelming majority of urban populations were engaged in the trades or in commerce. Slovak cities, located on important commercial highways which connected Slovakia with neighboring countries, became the centers of a lively economic life and made vital contacts with foreign cities (Bratislava, Levoča, Bardejov, Košice). In some towns there was an agricultural population which tilled the fields beyond the walls of the city.

In the cities which developed from ancient Slovak villages, the original Slovak population was preserved along with the German colonists. In the new cities, especially in

the mining cities, the inhabitants were almost exclusively German. They made it their concern to own all property, control the economy and political life and thus prevented other nationalities from settling in their cities. In such German towns, Slovaks could not buy property, own homes, engage in the trades, or have any part in the city government. Thus it happened that some cities in Slovakia retained their German character for a very long time. But in other cities, situated in densely populated areas, even the Slovaks settled, changed their national character, and engaged in the trades and the political life of the cities. In the second half of the fourteenth century, there were so many Slovaks in Žilina that King Louis the Great issued an order in 1381 which decreed that half of the members of the city council of Žilina had to be Slovak. In other cities Slovak churches were built along with German parish churches; this definitely attests to the fact that the Slovaks were relatively numerous in such cities. Already in the Middle Ages streets carried Slovak names in Bardejov and Prešov. In the following centuries, when a part of the Germans of Slovak cities perished in the wars, in which the cities suffered most, more and more Slovaks migrated to the cities so that gradually, but certainly, they became predominantly Slovak in character.

Jewish merchants began to settle in Slovak cities from the most ancient times. They usually occupied that part of the city which was set aside specifically for them. This Jewish section of the city was separated from the rest of the city by a wall (Zámocká Street and its vicinity in Bratislava; Jericho and Jerusalem Streets in Trnava; and Pavovce in Nitra).

(To be continued)

WHO SAID IT?

"Today more than ever before, I cannot stop believing that a free and independent Czecho-Slovakia can exist only in Europe that is brought to balance, where the West and Russia find a proper agreement to collaborate. Even the events of February 1948 could not shake me from this conviction, which remains the basis of my whole conception of national politics." — (The late Dr. Hubert Ripka, right-hand man of Dr. Edward Beneš, FIGARO, Paris, April 4, 1949.)

Officers of the Slovak League of America

(Organized May 26, 1907, Cleveland, Ohio)

Honorary Presidents

Dr. Peter P. Hietko
Batavia Rd., Box 17
Warrenville, Ill.

Msgr. F. J. Dubosh, P.A.
12608 Madison Avenue
Lakewood 7, Ohio

President

Philip A. Hrobák
P. O. Box 150
Middletown, Pa.

Vice-Presidents

Rev. John W. Krišpinský
2425 W. 11th Street
Cleveland, Ohio

Julia Krajčovič
1648 W. 18th Street
Chicago 8, Ill.

Recording Secretary

Constantine Čulen
537 Westview Rd.
Bedford, Ohio

Secretary-Treasurer

Milan V. Blažek
4922 S. Leclair Avenue
Chicago 38, Ill.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Paul P. Jamříška
536 Marie Ave.
Pittsburgh 2, Pa.

Joseph G. Pruša
205 Madison Street
Passaic, N. J.

Andrew J. Hamrock

61 Woodland Avenue
Campbell, Ohio

Stephen Dubiel

12210 Detroit Avenue
Lakewood, Ohio

Elizabeth Andrejko

551 Grove Avenue
Johnstown, Pa.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Michael J. Vargovič

National President
First Catholic Slovak Union

Helen Kočan

National President
First Catholic Slovak
Ladies Union

Paul Fallat

National President
Slovak Catholic Sokol

Stephen J. Tkach

National President
Pa. Catholic Slovak Union

Anna Soták

National President
Ladies Pennsylvania
Slovak Catholic Union

John Rozboril

National President
Slovak Catholic Cadet Union

SLOVAK NEWSPAPERS

(Affiliated with the Slovak League of America)

JEDNOTA

Middletown, Pa.

SLOVENSKÁ OBRANA

Scranton, Pa.

ŽENSKÁ JEDNOTA

Cleveland, Ohio

BRATSTVO

Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

SLOVENSKÉ NOVINY

Cleveland, Ohio

ZORNIČKA

Chicago, Ill.

KATOLÍCKY SOKOL

Passaic, N. J.

SVORNOST'

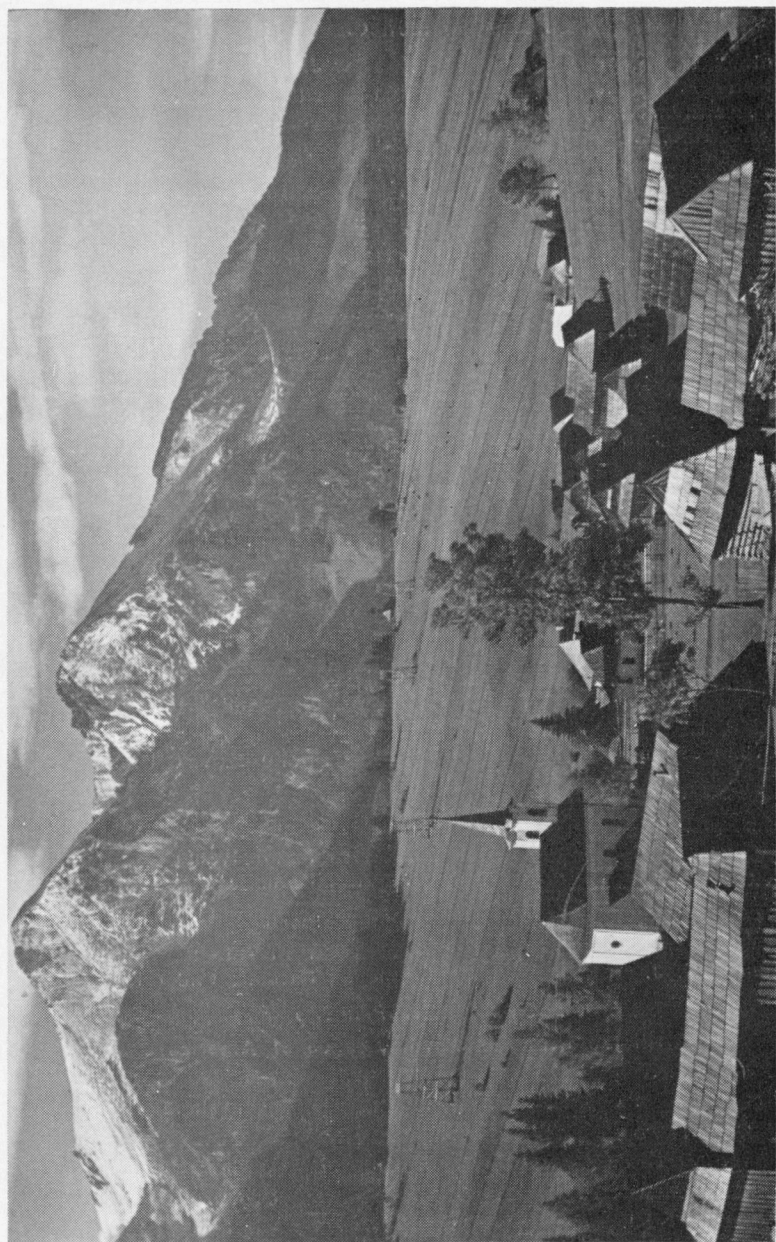
Whitaker, Pa.

OSADNÉ HLASY

Chicago, Ill.

SLOVÁK V AMERIKE

Middletown, Pa.



SLOVAKIA: The village of Ždiar in Spiš County

**GANSER LIBRARY
MILLERSVILLE STATE COLLEGE
MILLERSVILLE, PA. 17551**